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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you support a further one-year delay in federalization to Nov. 28, 2010?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

PANDEMIC ALERT STATUS

PHASE 5

As of June 10, 2009

Phase 1: Viruses circulating among animals have yet to cause infections in humans.

Phase 2: An animal influenza virus is causing infection in humans, and is considered a potential pandemic threat.

Phase 3: An animal or human-animal influenza virus has caused sporadic cases or small clusters of disease in people, but has not resulted in human-to-human transmission sufficient to sustain community-level outbreaks.

Phase 4: Verified human-to-human transmission of an animal or human-animal influenza virus able to cause "community-level outbreaks."

Phase 5: A strong signal that a pandemic is imminent and that the time to finalize the organization, communication, and implementation of planned mitigation measures is short.

Phase 6: The pandemic phase, is an indication that a global pandemic is underway.

For more information about the H1N1 flu, contact DPH at 236-8797, Monday to Friday, from 8am to 5pm, 234-8950 during after hours, e-mail cnmipheoc@gmail.com, or visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/.

Source: CNMI Department of Public Health, World Health Organization

INSIDE

Plant Blast

Two workers died when an explosion tore through a Slim Jim meat products plant in North Carolina.

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Instructor files discrimination lawsuit vs NMC. **PAGE 3**

8 WWII vets to arrive for Battle of Saipan rites. **PAGE 5**

Controversy mars THS graduation

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The parents of six Tinian High School seniors expressed themselves disappointed and frustrated with principal Florine Hofschneider after she failed their children despite complying with two make-up projects at the last minute. The issue caused the postponement of the issuance of diplomas to next week.

Yesterday was the scheduled graduation of over 40 seniors at the

See CONTROVERSY on Page 4

Police stop suspect from fleeing island

Internal auditor allegedly stole $7,000 from Delta

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A gas station outlet auditor who allegedly stole $7,000 from the company owned by NMI Crime Stoppers board chair James T. Arenovski was arrested yesterday just as she was about to leave the island.

Virginia C. Hernandez, 43, was scheduled to fly to the Philippines early yesterday morning when police arrested her at the Saipan International Airport.

Hernandez was brought to the Superior Court yesterday for a bail hearing. Associate Judge David A. Wiseman imposed a $5,000 cash bail for her tempo-

See POLICE on Page 4

Over 80 NWA aircraft now sport Delta colors

ROMMEL MONSERRAT

A Delta-Northwest aircraft docks into the parking bay of the Saipan International Airport. The aircraft sports the new colors of Delta to reflect the merger of the two companies, creating the world's largest airline firm in the world.

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Many Northwest aircraft now flying into the CNMI and Guam are sporting a new look—the official colors of Delta—following the repainting of its fleet to reflect the merger of Northwest and Delta Airlines.

Richard Parsons, the Guam-based spokesperson for Northwest-Delta, disclosed yesterday that Delta had already painted more than 80 Northwest aircraft into Delta's livery, with the rest to be re-

See OVER 80 on Page 4

'Some poker parlors not paying jackpot tax to govt'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Rep. David Apatang (R-Saipan) and other members of the House Ways and Means Committee chaired by Rep. Ray N. Yumul (R-Saipan) urged the Department of Finance yesterday to closely monitor poker arcades after confirming that some of them are not reporting, collecting and remitting jackpot winning taxes, thereby cheating the government of thousands in needed revenues.

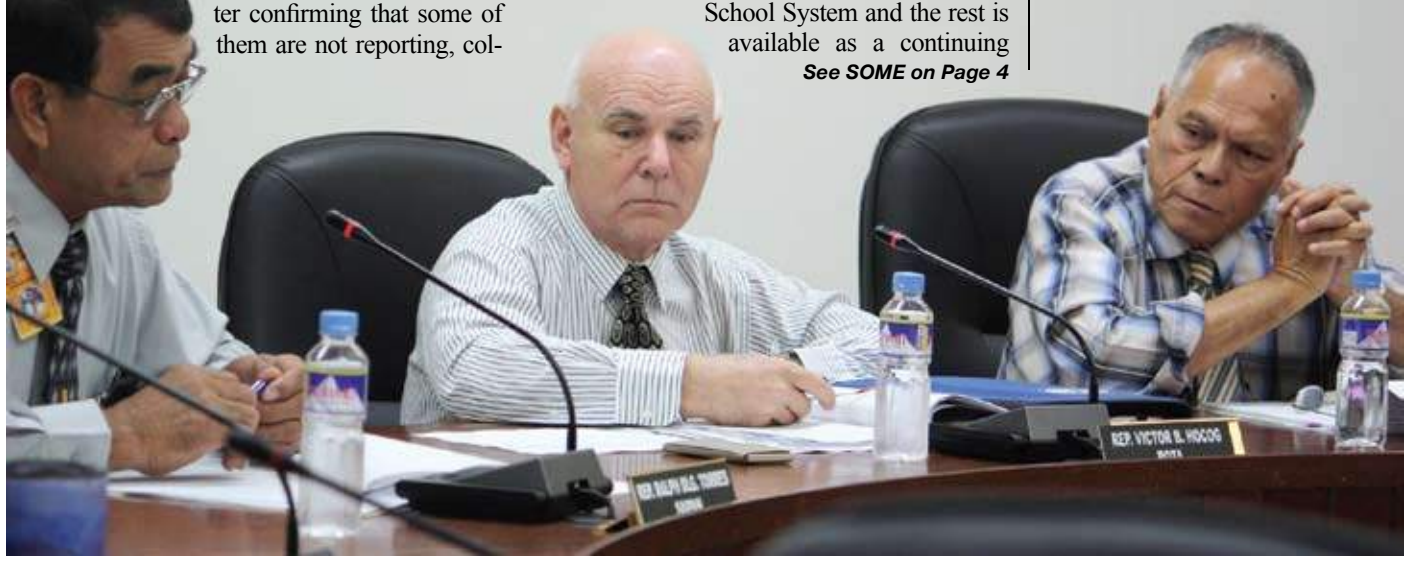
Public Law 15-78 imposes a 30 percent tax on jackpot winnings from poker machines, pachinko machines, slot machines, pachinko slot machines and similar gaming devices.

Under the law, 20 percent of the tax collection from jackpot winnings goes to the Public School System and the rest is available as a continuing

See SOME on Page 4

From left, Customs Director Jesus C. Muna, acting Finance Secretary Bob Schrack and Procurement and Supply Director Herman Sablan answer questions from members of the House Ways and Means Committee during a hearing on Finance's Fiscal Year 2010 budget yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



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Local

Butters, Duenas are Kagman High's top graduates

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Kenlyn Pearl P. Butters and Terrence John B. Duenas emerged this year's outstanding graduates of Kagman High School after being named the class valedictorian and salutatorian during Tuesday night's commencement exercises on campus.

Butters, who led the graduating class of 141 seniors, was the school's Board Of Education awardee and a recipient of six other recognitions, including the President's Excellence Award, Best in Math, Science, English, and Physical Education.

Butters, 18, is the daughter of Felina and Joseph Butters.

She will be attending the University of Guam this Fall semester to pursue an accounting and education degree.

KENLYN PEARL P. BUTTERS
Valedictorian

TERRENCE JOHN B. DUENAS
Salutatorian

"It's very rewarding!" she told *Saipan Tribune* about her many recognitions.

Butters hopes fellow graduates "will continue to strive to achieve their goals and ambitions for their future. I am looking forward to seeing all of them in the near future."

Kagman High's second highest honor went to Terrence John Duenas, who received the Commissioner's Award. He was also awarded the President's Excellence Award, and subject awards like Best in Math, Social Studies, English, and Japanese Language.

Duenas, 17, the son of Ann Doris and Ronald Dulog, has been accepted to the Shoreline Community College in Shoreline, Washington, where he plans on majoring in Engineering.

Duenas is also among the six CNMI students who were awarded a Saipan Chamber of Commerce scholarship this year.

Both Butters and Duenas were also awarded the prestigious Robert C. Byrd Scholarship grant, which provides a $6,000 financial assistance for college.

Kagman High Principal Alfred Ada meantime bestowed this year's Principal's Award to Jessica Riva Babauta, while governor's special assistant Esther Fleming conferred the Governor's Award on Naomi Therese DLG. Benjamin.

Peter O. Delos Reyes was given the Milestone Award.

Students in the Top Ten included Butters, Duenas, Loremel A. Hocog, Querlaine Brittney DLG. Blas, Daisy Lynn T. Demapan, Naomi Therese DLG. Benjamin, Ryan Francis DLG. Ada, Bonny Lynn A. Cruz, Ashley Renea C. Fujihira, and Yvonne Marie DLG. Bennett.

The school also recognized the hard work of its vice principal for discipline, Eric Magofna, who was given the PTSA Award.

Besides Butters and Duenas, four other Kagman High graduating students were awarded the Robert C. Byrd Scholarship this year: Hocog, Bennett, Cruz, and Benjamin.

Mayor Juan B. Tudela conferred the Saipan Mayor's Award to Ignacio Herman DLG. Cabrera, while Bennett was awarded the Outstanding Female Graduate medal.

The Rotary Club named Laurence S. Sablan as its vocational awardee.

Besides the inspirational messages of BOE chair Lucy Blanco-Maratita, Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan, and guest speakers Jefferey and Rebecca Warfield, special tributes to parents and teachers highlighted the ceremonies.

Last Monday, the school recognized the achievements of the graduating class members in subject areas during the special pre-awarding ceremonies.

Members of the school's Mathcount team, Athletes of the Year, CNMI Best Dance Crew, NMC Best Dance Crew, Poetry Slammers, Marianas Idol 2008, and Bennett were recognized in that ceremony.

Feds approve 3-year marine conservation plan for CNMI

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The federal government has approved the amended three-year marine conservation plan for the CNMI which identifies 12 objectives and 22 programs or projects for potential funding under a Pacific Insular Area Fishery Agreement, including an exclusive economic zone enforcement program and foreign fishing revenue for the Puerto Rico dump cleanup.

In the May 29, 2009 Federal Register, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced its approval of the amended marine conservation plan for the CNMI.

"This agency decision is effective Oct. 6, 2008 through Oct. 6, 2011," NOAA said.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial submitted the amended marine conservation plan dated March 2009.

NOAA said the March 2009 document revises the objective related to domestic fisheries development, and the prioritization of projects.

"The amendments are aimed at further promoting the development and enhancing the economic viability of CNMI fisheries," NOAA said.

The amended marine conservation plan contains 12 objectives which are consistent with the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council's five existing fishery management plans.

These include data collection and reporting; resource assessment and monitoring; incidental catch, bycatch, and protected species interaction; management procedures; and marine conservation education.

The plan also identifies 22 programs or projects associated with the plan objectives for potential funding under a Pacific Insular Area Fishery Agreement.

These include an exclusive economic zone enforcement program; commercial harvest monitoring system; fisheries technology and education program; development of fish marketing plan; CNMI commercial fisheries baseline assessment; and regional fisheries meeting and conferences funding assistance.

Also on the list are vessel monitoring program; construction of cold storage, fish processing, and fish market facilities; foreign fishery observer program; establishment of fishery management units for the EEZ; Northern Islands remote fishing station project; charter fishing economic impact study; and foreign fishing revenue for the Puerto Rico dump cleanup.

In June 2007, the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council approved a marine conservation plan for the CNMI and recommended its submission to the Secretary of Commerce for approval.

NOAA's NMFS, designee of the Secretary, received the plan on March 10, 2008.

Following review and revision of the marine conservation plan, the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources submitted the completed plan on behalf of Fitial to NMFS on Sept. 23, 2008.

That marine conservation plan, dated June 2007, satisfied the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act Section 204(e), and was approved for the three-year period Oct. 6 through Oct. 6, 2011.

Instructor files discrimination lawsuit vs NMC

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

A long-time instructor at the Northern Marianas College has filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission a discrimination complaint against the college.

Hiroko Yasukata has been a full-time Japanese instructor at NMC since 1998. Because of her category as a nonresident worker, NMC only provides her a one-year contract, which it has been renewing in the past 10 years.

Her employment term expired on Dec. 11, 2008. Because she didn't receive any notification about the termination of her contract, she continued working at the college, assuming that it's the same process as in previous years. Her department chair had recommended that she be retained and was, in fact, interviewed for this.

Meantime, the college posted a vacancy announcement for a Japanese instructor a day after Yasukata's employment term expired.

The problem surfaced when, to Yasukata's surprise, she didn't receive a paycheck on Jan. 16, 2009, due to the expiration of her contract on Dec. 11, 2008.

"I was informed by my department chair that once the president renews my contract, I should get double paychecks on the next payroll date," she said.

Three days later, she was verbally informed by her department that her contract would not be renewed by NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez.

Japanese class 100 was then cancelled on that day. An adjunct instructor was seen teaching the class on the first day of the semester.

Yasukata went to NMC's Human Resource Office and inquired about the matter. She was then informed by the department that her contract will now be "extended," but only for six months and not the usual one-year term.

On March 8, Yasukata filed a formal grievance with the HR office and Appeals Committee. The grievance was then referred to the college president on March 20.

Yasukata told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that the grievance has been sitting at the president's desk since then.

In the appeal hearing last Monday, Yasukata testified that it took her three months to finally reach an appeal hearing for her grievance—with just seven days left on her employment contract extension.

She cited that it is a violation of the CNMI labor law not to give a 30-day notice of nonrenewal prior to the end of an employment contract, which is also a violation of the Board of Regents policy.

"If NMC wanted to eliminate my full-time position, they needed to notify me before Nov. 11, 2008," she said.

She disclosed that she sought a meeting with the president five times but all five meetings were cancelled.

"I hope that the members of the committee will agree that I have been treated poorly at NMC for the past six months," she said.

"I don't understand what's the problem with renewing my contract? My student evaluations have been consistently good in the last 11 years…and my department chair has praised my efforts," she said yesterday.

'Committee affirms president's decision'

In its decision rendered June 8, a copy of which was obtained by *Saipan Tribune*, the appeals committee said: "Having reviewed and considered the documents and testimony presented, the policies of NMC and the arguments of Hiroko…the committee hereby affirms the decision of president Fernandez not to renew the employment contract of Hiroko."

The appeals committee is composed of regents Elaine Orilla, Juan Demapan, Malua Peter, counseling program and services director Leo Pangelinan, and finance officer Elena Hofschneider.

In a May 15, 2009, memorandum from Fernandez, Hiroko was told that the full-time position for a Japanese instructor is not being offered at this time. Instead, NMC currently has plans to employ an adjunct to teach Japanese classes in the Fall semester and there is a qualified applicant interested in filling the part-time position.

By the terms of Hiroko's employment contract, Fernandez said it "is not automatically renewable, nor does it create or imply any obligation on the part of the college to renew the contract."

Hiroko is optimistic that, with the case she filed with EEOC, she may get the justice and fair treatment she was never accorded at NMC, which she said has been a "home" for her for the past 11 years.

House speaker 'reluctant' to sign off on 14 replacement hires at Rev&Tax

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan) yesterday said he is "reluctant" to sign off on the 14 replacement hires proposed for the Division of Revenue and Taxation by the Department of Finance as Fiscal Year 2009 will end in three months and only seven of these positions are funded in the governor's proposed FY 2010 budget.

Palacios said he has so far signed off on only two "critical" administrative positions requested by the judiciary.

He asked Sen. Maria "Frica" Pangelinan (D-Saipan) and Rep. Ray N. Yumul (R-Saipan) to review Finance's certification for replacement hiring, to which Pangelinan said the 14 positions are not critical.

Pangelinan also said the decision to certify the replacement hiring should at least wait for the legislative review of the FY 2010 budget to determine the actual number of employees currently on board, their personnel costs, and whether these vacant positions can be funded without reducing the salaries of existing employees.

Revenue and Taxation's Frances Ada said these positions are hard to fill because of the qualifications required.

Acting Finance Secretary Bob Schrack, at the same time, told the House Ways and Means Committee yesterday that the department can live within Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's budget submission for FY 2010 of $4,256,969.

"As far as the Department of Finance is concerned, we can fund our activities within the governor's budget if the austerity measures are enacted and if the 11 percent retirement contribution is applied…then the budget will work for us," he told *Saipan Tribune* after the budget hearing.

Schrack said while different divisions under Finance each has hiring requests for FY 2010, it will be up to the Legislature to approve of these requests.

Committee chair Rep. Ray N. Yumul (R-Saipan) and other committee members said they will review Finance's budget submission, along with other agencies' budget requests.

Besides Schrack, at least six division heads and representatives from Finance attended yesterday's budget hearing in the House chamber.

One of them was Customs Director Jesus C. Muna, who said his division needs at least 14 additional employees for FY 2010 so that there will be a fourth shift for customs and quarantine personnel who are currently overworked with only three shifts.

Each shift has five employees

"We want to create another shift. We have three shifts and each shift has five employees. We have to put seven people per shift. This will reduce number of overtime at the airport. Right now we're rotating people," he told lawmakers.

Muna later said in an interview that Customs is incurring

See HOUSE on Next Page

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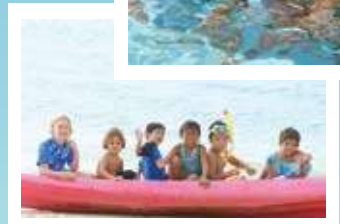

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Consultant affirms Fund's loss of over $66M

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A Merrill Lynch official confirmed yesterday that the Fund lost $16.4 million in investments due to the CNMI government's failure to remit its employer contributions.

Kenan Knieriem of Merrill Lynch also testified that because the Fund had to withdraw over $100 million from Fiscal Year 2007 to 2009, the Fund probably lost about $50 million more.

Merrill Lynch is the Fund's main investment consultant and manages the performance of the Fund's several money managers.

Viola Alepuyo, the Fund's legal counsel, called Knieriem to the witness stand during the hearing before Superior Court associate judge Kenneth Govendo.

Knieriem, who was in Honolulu, testified through videoconference. Govendo used the U.S. District Court courtroom, which has the technology for the videoconferencing, for the second phase of the Fund's hearing.

The second phase of the hearing focuses on the "extraneous damages" the Fund incurred because of the government's continued failure to remit its employer contributions.

Knieriem discussed the formula used in calculating the loss of income opportunity on the $215.2 million unpaid by the government from 1999 to 2009.

In response to Alepuyo's direct examination, Knieriem confirmed that the Fund lost $16.4 million in potential investment earnings because the Fund was not paid $215.2 million worth of employer contributions.

He also agreed with Alepuyo that because the Fund had to withdraw more than $100 million from Fiscal Year 2007 to 2009, the Fund probably lost about $50 million more.

Knieriem said any withdrawal of investment during an economic crash is a "huge, huge mistake."

"They will never able to recoup or recover the losses. I would strongly advice against that," he said.

Citing economic crashes in previous years, Knieriem said the Fund's investment portfolio has managed to survive.

He noted that in January, February and March of this year, the stock market went up.

Knieriem also explained how the 2008 economic upheaval began and how corporate earnings were dramatically affected.

Alepuyo told *Saipan Tribune* that the Fund's loan officer and technical analyst, Richard Villagomez, will undergo cross examination by the government's counsel, Anthony Welch, today. She said closing arguments are scheduled to be heard on Monday at 9am.

HOUSE

From Page 3

an estimated $10,000 a month in overtime pay.

Lawmakers said under the governor's budget submission, overtime pay is not allowed for Customs, but Muna said restricting overtime will impact inspections at the airport and seaport of passengers and cargo.

When asked by Rep. David Apatang (R-Saipan) about Customs' current receivable, Muna said the division's computer system is down so he won't be able to provide the data right away, but he expects the system to be up and running in a few days.

Muna also said Customs has no way of ascertaining whether products coming into the CNMI are genuine "Energy Star" items and are therefore exempt from taxes.

Rep. Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan) said the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency may be tapped to train local customs personnel on determining tax-exempt energy saving products entering the CNMI.

Yumul asked Muna about the copper wire theft that Customs earlier pursued, to which Muna said no charges were filed because the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. itself couldn't determine that the copper wires were theirs. Muna said Customs held the container for six months.

Lilian T. Gumba of Finance and Accounting said her division used to have 44 fulltime employees, and now down to 21, excluding the director. She said the payroll, travel, federal grants and other sections need additional personnel.

Antonette Calvo of Finance's Treasury said her division needs at least two more fulltime employees, and asked lawmakers to consider giving pay raises to two employees who are only earning $15,000 to $16,000 a year despite having enormous workload.

Procurement and Supply Director Herman Sablan said he has no problem with the governor's budget submission for his division, but asked lawmakers to consider hiring a legal counsel to help him with his workload.

Procurement and Supply has only nine personnel.

Apatang said he recommends the House Ways and Means Committee to allow hiring a legal counsel for the division, given that procurement matters need legal as well as technical expertise.

Schrack said the accountability needed for every procurement using federal stimulus funding received by the CNMI makes it all the more important for Procurement and Supply to have a legal counsel.

SOME

From Page 1

appropriation.

Apatang, during a hearing on Finance's Fiscal Year 2010 budget yesterday, said some poker parlors also violate the law by giving half of the 30 percent jackpot tax to the winning player and keeping the other half to themselves, not reporting the jackpot winning to Finance.

"A lot of them are cheating the government, that's why we're losing a lot of money. Finance should enforce the jackpot winning taxes. We can't continue to have honest establishments pay their taxes and others don't. Those establishments that don't pay taxes should be shut down," Apatang said during the budget hearing.

Frances Ada of Finance's Revenue and Taxation Division said they would need additional revenue agents to ensure all jackpot winnings are reported and taxes are collected.

"The winnings are reported by the establishments, unless people come in and complain that they didn't receive a W2G form from the establishment," Ada told lawmakers.

Poker players who win a jackpot are supposed to receive a W2G form from the poker establishment, indicating that the 30 percent jackpot winning tax is recorded and collected.

But she said unless jackpot winners report their winning to Finance, the department could only rely on the poker establishments' report of any winning.

Acting Finance Secretary Bob Schrack told lawmakers that the government may have to issue a notice encouraging the public to report their jackpot winnings.

Once the jackpot winnings are known, then Finance's Revenue and Taxation Division would monitor whether the operator of the poker establishment where the winning occurred would report, collect, and remit the tax collection to the government.

Rep. Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan) said if Finance can guarantee higher tax collection by hiring additional personnel, then this could help justify any request for more employees.

But Schrack said this it is difficult to determine whether more taxes will be collected.

Under the law, licensed owner-operators of gaming machines are responsible for collecting the tax, keeping record of the tax assessed, and submitting a winning listing and the taxes collected within 15 days of the end of each month to the secretary of Finance.

In an interview after the hearing, Apatang said he was informed of at least two poker parlors that did not report their jackpot winnings recently, but Revenue and Taxation went after the owner-operators to collect the taxes.

"If nobody reported the winnings, then these two would have not been asked to pay the taxes. How many other poker establishments out there do not collect and report to Finance the winnings and the taxes?" Apatang told *Saipan Tribune*.

During the hearing, he told Finance officials to "enforce the law."

Schrack said Finance will look closely into this.

OVER 80

From Page 1

painted by the end of 2010.

"The merger between Northwest and Delta is creating more choices that will benefit our Guam and CNMI communities, as well as our local customers," he added.

He disclosed plans for the merged companies' to get a single operating certificate soon.

"Delta continues to make progress toward achieving a single operating certificate by the end of the year," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Northwest Airlines is now a wholly owned subsidiary of Delta Air Lines, the largest airline company in the world.

In a statement issued yesterday, the company said the Delta-Northwest merger brings service enhancements to international flights.

"Customers traveling Delta Airlines on international flights now enjoy the same in-flight experience on both Delta and its subsidiary, Northwest Airlines—the latest sign that Delta and Northwest are now one," the statement said.

POLICE

From Page 1

rary liberty. Preliminary hearing was set for June 17 at 9am.

Hernandez, an outlet auditor of Delta Management Corp., was arrested on charges of theft and theft by failure to make required disposition of funds received.

Arenovski is president of Delta Management Corp., which owns some Shell gas stations on the island.

Detective Joaquin I. Deleon Guerrero stated in his report that it was the chief auditor of Delta Management Corp. who discovered on May 29 that $7,000 was missing from the account of Island Marine Sports, a client of the Shell gas station in Susupe.

Hernandez, as outlet auditor, handled the daily sales reports for the history of Island Marine's account.

Deleon Guerrero said that after discovering the missing money, the chief auditor immediately informed their operations manager about it.

Hernandez then approached the chief auditor and allegedly admitted taking $5,000. Hernandez reportedly begged the chief auditor not to disclose the matter to Arenovski and that she would pay the amount by the end of June.

Hernandez also allegedly asked the chief auditor to make it appear that there was just an error in posting the account. The chief auditor explained to Hernandez that the matter couldn't be kept secret because there is backup data in their computer.

The following day, Hernandez texted the chief auditor that she has $1,500 that she could pay the company by June 1, 2009. The chief auditor told the defendant that payment should be in full. That same day, the chief auditor informed Arenovksi about the matter.

Arenovski instructed the chief auditor to call the police. He also contacted the Department of Public Safety's Criminal Investigation Bureau.

Arenovski later called the police to report that Hernandez had confessed to him that she took the money and that she gave him a personal check in the amount of $2,000.

The check's owner, a friend of Hernandez, told police that Hernandez first asked her for money for the enrollment of her children. The check owner explained that she let Hernandez borrow money because it was for her children.

Later, Hernandez told the check owner that she would use the money to pay Arenovski because she was in trouble. The check owner then proceeded to the bank to stop the payment.

Police investigation indicated that Hernandez did not remit the pay-ins for Island Marine, causing a discrepancy in the Delta Management's report.

Hernandez allegedly held on to the receipts and charge invoices pertaining to the Island Marine account.

CONTROVERSY

From Page 1

Tinian High School but the ceremony became a mere "candidacy" rite after Public School System officials decided to put off issuing the diplomas to June 15.

The issue came about after Hofschneider, who handles some of the classes at Tinian High, gave failing grades to six graduating students. When the students appealed, she gave them two makeup projects, which they reportedly complied with. Still, Hofschneider failed the students, informing them of her decision just hours before the scheduled graduation ceremony.

Saipan Tribune learned that a meeting took place yesterday between the parents, their children, Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan and Board of Education chairwoman Lucy Blanco-Maratita. The parents—James Mendiola, Esteban Borja, Alex Sandbergen, Norbert Hofschneider, and Martin Evangelista—had apparently asked for the Commissioner's and the Board's intervention in the issue. The meeting took place about 10am—just hours before the supposed graduation ceremony, scheduled for 5pm on Tinian.

"We saw how our kids worked hard and put so much efforts into their projects, which they completed within a very short notice from their principal. It's so frustrating and disappointing to see the confusion on their faces if they are going to graduate or not," one of the parents told *Saipan Tribune*.

In an interview with one of the affected senior students, the student narrated that it was only last week when the school counselor informed them about their failing grades. The student said they asked Hofschneider for reconsideration.

The principal, the student said, gave them a makeup project—an individual book report—which they completed during the weekend and submitted on Monday.

"I put a lot of my time to finish the last-minute project because I want to graduate. I even spent almost a whole night to finish the report and prepared the presentation. I was disappointed when I was told that the book report is not enough to get a passing grade," the student said.

The principal, the student added, then asked them individually to do another research project, which they picked up from the principal's house at 9pm Monday.

"The research paper must be 10-15 pages and due the next day. We still completed the project with the hope that we can get the passing grade from her. But it didn't happen," the student said.

It was only yesterday morning that they were informed of the principal's decision—that they can't graduate due to some lack in required points.

Their parents trooped to the school yesterday to wait for the principal's decision.

"They kept waiting for the result… even at the very last minute, only to find out they didn't make it. We want to know what system of grading was used on our kids…" another parent said.

Parents interviewed by *Saipan Tribune* disclosed that it was Commissioner Sablan who decided to hold off the issuance of the diplomas until June 15 so PSS can review the case of the six senior students.

The commissioner, the students said, still encouraged them to join the "candidacy" rites, which pushed through yesterday.

When contacted yesterday, Sablan refused to comment while Board chair Maratita said she cannot comment on such confidential matters due to the Family and Educational Rights Protection Act.

Hofschneider never returned *Saipan Tribune*'s calls.

Current defeats Bell's attempt to swim to Aguijan

By ANITA B. HOFSCHNEIDER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Jim Bell, a CNMI resident who planned to celebrate his 71st birthday this week by swimming the channel between Tinian and Aguijan, was forced to abandon his endeavor due to the strength of a reverse current.

"Although he was swimming south toward Goat Island [Aguijan] all day, he ended up north of his starting point—east of Marpo Point on the east side of Tinian," said Kevan Clawson, a Tinian resident and friend of Bell, via e-mail yesterday.

Bell

Bell began his swim at 8:14am on June 9, departing from Taga Beach and swimming past Carolina Point, the southern point of Tinian.

"After three hours of swimming, Goat Island appeared smaller than when I first started," said Bell via e-mail yesterday.

The reverse current pulled Bell to the east side of Tinian past Suicide Cliff. He had to fight to get back to shore. He described the process of getting to the base of the cliffs as the "worst beating" he has ever experienced in the ocean.

Despite these difficulties, Bell plans to go to Aguijan on June 12 by boat and swim along the shorelines of the island and Naftan Rock. He intends to swim from Aguijan to Tinian on June 14.

This is not the first time that Bell has sought to swim between islands. Bell celebrated his 70th birthday last year by swimming the channel between Tinian and Saipan in less than four hours. A few months later, he swam from Saipan to Tinian in a trip that took 26 hours.

8 WWII heroes to arrive for Battle of Saipan rites

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Some eight American war veterans are scheduled to return to Saipan for the first time since the Battle of Saipan and Tinian in 1944. Four will arrive today and four others on Saturday.

The WWII veterans will be honored during the commemoration of the 65th Anniversary of the Battle of Saipan on Sunday at the American Memorial Park.

The returning war heroes are now in their eighties, so their families will be coming to assist them, said Ruth Coleman, executive director of the Military and Veterans Affairs Office.

The commemoration ceremony will start at 4pm on Sunday at the AMP Court of Honor, following activities for the veterans.

Local families will host each arriving veteran with a lunch or a tour around the islands beginning at 10am Sunday morning. Members of the commemoration committee chaired by Chuck Sayon organized this "adopt a veteran" program.

A seminar will also be held from 1pm to 3:30pm at the AMP Visitors' Center where professors will discuss some of the veterans' accounts of the war.

In conjunction with the returning U.S. war veterans, five local WWII marine scouts will also be given medallions.

Three of them, Manuel Villagomez, Nicolas Muna, and Santiago Babauta, will be present to receive the awards.

The other two, Igancio Sablan and Antonio Tenorio, will not be able to come since they are too weak for such a celebration, according to Coleman.

Incoming Commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars Larry Guerrero will lead the awarding of medals to the returning war heroes.

Acting Gov. Eloy Inos will lead the commemoration ceremonies with Rear Admiral William D. French, U.S. Defense Representative. Commander of the U.S. Naval Forces in the Marianas will serve as keynote speaker.

After the ceremonies the veterans will have dinner from 5pm to 7pm on a sunset cruise around Managaha.

The commemoration committee will meet at 3pm today.

Coleman said the committee members will discuss preparation of the activities as well as other highlights, including the visiting ship, sightseeing for some of the veterans, and an overnight stay on Tinian.

There will also be a campfire on Sunday night where the veterans will have the opportunity to exchange ideas and share their accounts of the war.

CHC gets hospital gowns, bed sheets, baby blankets

Members of the Commonwealth Health Center Volunteers Association are scheduled to collect today packages containing hospital clothing that include gowns, bed sheets, blankets and towels they purchased through donations from the CNMI community.

The association's president, Maggie Wonenberg, said that CTSI Logistics, though the support of its general manager, Renato Magalong, and Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan, donated half of the cost of the shipment, amounting to $500.

Wonenberg, along with association board members Amparo Tenorio and Rita Tenorio, will receive the shipment of the hospital clothing they purchased from U.S. based Your Specialty Store.

Since the total cost of the shipment is $949.32, CHC Volunteers will pay the balance of $449.32.

"For some time now, the hospital has been in need of these materials, especially the gowns for the patients. The CHC Volunteers has been fortunate to receive donations from various sectors of the community including Tan Holdings, PIC Saipan, Rotary Club Saipan & International, among many others," Wonenberg said.

Also at 1:30pm today, the Rotary Club of Saipan will join the CHC Volunteers in turning over a baby blanket as donation to a mother and her baby at the Well Baby Nursery of CHC. The donation is part of the 300 baby blankets that the Rotary donated some two weeks ago to CHC. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

Tinian set to host '09 general assembly of Marianas mayors

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Tinian will be hosting this year's general assembly of the Association of Marianas Islands Mayors, where vice mayors and municipal councilors will discuss pressing issues.

The general assembly will be held in November when AMIM members elect a new president.

Tudela

Melissa Sabares of Dededo, Guam, is the current AMIM president.

Members of the group are from the different municipalities of Guam, Rota, Tinian, Saipan and Northern Islands.

Sabares confirmed Tinian's hosting of the general assembly this year in a telephone conversation with Saipan Municipal Council chair Antonio Tudela.

Sabares told Tudela that the next president to be elected for the association would come from the CNMI.

Just last May, Saipan hosted the annual conference of the Association of Pacific Island Local Governments, with Tudela as the chairperson of the steering committee.

In a speech delivered during the APILG conference, Tudela stressed the importance of discussing among members the issues that affect the region.

These include the impending military buildup in Guam, the application of federal labor and immigration laws to the CNMI, regional opportunities in construction, and sustaining a viable tourism industry in light of the current economic climate in the region.

These concerns as well as issues involving education, health care, technology and the environment are expected to be included in the agenda during the AMIM general assembly on Tinian.

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Life in Motion

Judge denies Villagomez's motion to disqualify

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson has denied former Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez's motion to disqualify him from presiding over any proceedings in the Rydlyme case.

Munson determined that most of the allegations in Villagomez's motion are not supported by facts and that none are directed at a party and none are based on "extrajudicial conduct."

"I cannot, in good conscience, recuse myself from a case"just because a party [that is dissatisfied with my rulings] claims bias," said the judge in his decision issued Tuesday.

Munson said he is mindful of the seriousness of an allegation of judicial bias and his duty to recuse himself when the facts warrant a reasonable question of his impartiality.

However, the judge said, Villagomez and his co-defendants, James A. Santos and Joaquina V. Santos, failed to support the allegations with facts.

"Even if I engaged in all of the conduct defendants allege [communicating privately with a prospective juror, ruling incorrectly on trial objections, etc.] the conduct does not raise a reasonable question of my impartiality," he said.

A federal jury in April found Villagomez and the Santos couple guilty of conspiracy to commit offenses against the U.S., wire fraud, theft concerning a program receiving federal funds, and bribery concerning funds.

Munson

Villagomez

Villagomez filed the motion to disqualify. The Santos couple joined in the motion, arguing that Munson's actions throughout the trial cause his impartiality to be questioned because he allegedly:

■ Had an "ex parte communication" with a prospective juror (government witness).

■ Handled evidentiary issues in a way that implied bias.

■ Made comments that reflected his "predisposition against the defense."

■ Managed the courtroom in a way that implied bias.

The defendants argued that these actions "cast a dark cloud of judicial misconduct over the proceedings."

Munson said any and all communication that happened between himself and a prosecution witness occurred in open court and on the record.

Munson said defendants' argument that he met privately with the prosecution witness "and provide(d) him counsel" "is not only inapposite to his impartiality in this case, it is a distortion of the record."

"There are not facts to support the allegation that an 'ex parte communication' occurred. Even if it had occurred it would not have reasonably called into question my impartiality, it would not have been directed at a party, and it would not have been an 'extrajudicial act,'" he pointed out.

Munson said his alleged biased conduct regarding his treatment of evidentiary matters was not supported by facts, does not call into question his impartiality, was not directed at defendants, and was not "extrajudicial."

As for his comments during cross-examination, Munson said the alleged conduct is again not directed at defendants and is not "extrajudicial."

As to how he managed the courtroom during the trial, Munson said the case was a criminal prosecution of one of the highest public officials in the CNMI, his sister, and his brother-in-law.

Munson said the two additional U.S. Marshals present during the trial ensured the safety of the jurors, the court, the parties, and the public, as well as the integrity of the jury by avoiding any potential for jury interaction with the parties, the lawyers, or the court.

In addition, Munson noted that on the first day of trial, some members of the public sat in their vehicles in the parking lot opposite the courthouse, yelling obscenities by making obscene gestures at the courthouse.

The judge said one of the functions of the Marshal is to enforce courtroom rules.

"The allegations are speculative and again, any perceived intimidation should have been immediately brought to [my] attention," he said.

Munson said if the defendants mean to imply that their friends and family were not able to observe the proceedings, this is not true.

He cited that the courtroom is equipped with multiple large screen, high-definition monitors to provide the observing press and public a view of the witnesses and evidence submitted to the court from every seat in the courtroom.

"Defendants' allegation that my management of the courtroom implies bias fails because it is purely speculative, is not directed at defendants, and is again not 'extrajudicial,'" he said.

'Proposed athletic body will duplicate DCCA's functions'

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The proposed creation of an athletic commission would duplicate DCCA's function, said acting Secretary Melvin L.O. Faisao of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs yesterday.

During a recent public hearing on the proposed House Local Bill 16-26, Faisao urged the House Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations to establish better communications with DCCA.

Authored by Rep. Stanley Torres, the bill seeks to establish the Saipan Local Athletic Commission that would regulate mixed martial arts activities in the CNMI.

Faisao said the creation of DCCA already established the Division of Sports and Recreation.

This division, he said, administers the programs "relating to team and individual sports, recreational activities and physical fitness for youth and adults, including senior citizens and persons with mental or physical disabilities."

A provision in the law (PL-4-66) regarding an amateur sports association already exists, Faisao pointed out during the hearing.

This law, Faisao said, placed the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association under the Division of Sports and Recreation of the DCCA for administration and coordination.

Faisao encouraged discussion to ensure that the bill passed will not duplicate previous mandates.

"DCCA welcomes further dialogue to assure that there will be no duplication or oversight over existing statutory mandates," he said, "and dialogue regarding enforcement and fiscal allocations be incorporated that will be beneficial to the youths and senior citizens programs in recreational activities and physical fitness."Mixed martial arts organizers and athletes oppose the bill, contending its negative effects outweigh the positive.

Justis "Cuki" Alvarez, president and promoter of Trench Tech, Inc., said he supports regulating MMA but several provisions in the proposed bill are unfavorable.

If passed, the bill will mandate promoters, managers, trainers, and ring officials to secure licenses from the commission and pay corresponding fees.

A bond no less than $10,000 is required before a promoter obtains a license, while promoters are also mandated to pay a minimum fee of $1,000 for every event, and fighters maybe required to get insurance coverage.

Alvarez complained that such fees are too high.

Jeff Boyer of Gorilla Warfare MMA said he sees it as a way to stop the growth of MMA.

Palau agrees to take Uighur detainees

RAY LILLEY
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—The remote Pacific island nation of Palau said Wednesday it has agreed to a U.S. request to temporarily resettle up to 17 Chinese Muslims now held at the Guantanamo Bay detention center on Cuba.

Palau President Johnson Toribiong said the administration of President Barack Obama made the request last week and that his country was "honored and proud" to resettle the detainees from China's Uighur minority as a humanitarian gesture.

His archipelago, with a population of about 20,000, will accept up to 17 of the detainees subject to periodic review, Toribiong said in a statement released to The Associated Press.

The Obama administration sought a solution for the detainees after facing fierce congressional opposition to releasing them on U.S. soil despite a Pentagon determination that they were not "enemy combatants."

"Palau's accommodation to accept the temporary resettlement of these detainees is a humanitarian gesture intended to help them be freed of any further unnecessary incarceration and to restart their lives in as normal a fashion as possible," Toribiong said.

Palau, made up of eight main islands plus more than 250 islets, is best known for diving and tourism and is located some 500 miles (800 kilometers) east of the Philippines in the Pacific Ocean.

A federal judge last year ordered the Uighur detainees released into the United States after the Pentagon determined they were not "enemy combatants." But an appeals court halted the order, and they have been in legal limbo ever since.

U.S. officials have not said publicly where the detainees might be sent, but said privately that Palau was a prime candidate for their relocation.

Asked Tuesday about discussions with Palau on the Uighurs, State Department spokesman Ian Kelly declined to comment beyond saying the U.S. is "working closely with our friends and allies regarding resettlement" of detainees at Guantanamo.

Two U.S. officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the U.S. was prepared to give Palau up to $200 million in development, budget support and other assistance in return for accepting the Uighurs and as part of a mutual defense and cooperation treaty that is due to be renegotiated this year.

The U.S. would not send the Uighurs back to China for fear they will be tortured or executed. Beijing says Uighur insurgents are leading an Islamic separatist movement in China's far west and wants those held at Guantanamo to be returned to China.

China's Foreign Ministry did not immediately react to the news when contacted by the AP on Wednesday.

Palau is one of a handful of mainly Pacific island, Latin American and African countries that does not recognize China and maintains diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

In 2006, Albania accepted five Uighur detainees from Guantanamo but has since balked at taking others, partly for fear of diplomatic repercussions from China.

The State Department said last week that Daniel Fried, the career diplomat who was named earlier this year to oversee Guantanamo's closure, had visited Palau but offered no details on his mission. Fried has been negotiating with third countries to accept many of the Guantanamo detainees.

A former U.S. trust territory in the Pacific, Palau has retained close ties with the United States since independence in 1994 when it signed a Free Compact of Association with the U.S.

While it is independent, it relies heavily on U.S. aid and is dependent on the United States for its defense. Native-born Palauans are allowed to enter the United States without passports or visas.

AP

In this photo, reviewed by the U.S. military, Chinese ethnic Uighur Guantanamo detainees, who are cleared for release but with no country to go to, show a home-made note of protest to visiting members of the media, at Camp Iguana detention facility, at Guantanamo Bay U.S. Naval Base, Cuba, Monday, June 1, 2009.

Permit not required for pesticide amnesty

Transportation permits will not be required for the purpose of transporting pesticides as part of the upcoming Amnesty project, according to the Division of Environmental Quality.

The Amnesty project is a Commonwealth-wide collection of pesticides that require disposal due to age, condition of containers, contamination, cancellation, or lack of labels or registration. It is an opportunity for the community to dispose of unwanted pesticides and pesticide containers at no cost.

Spearheaded by DEQ in collaboration with Environmental Protection Agency, the Amnesty will take place on Saipan on Thursday, July 16; on Rota on Friday, July 17; and on Tinian on Saturday, July 18.

DEQ encourages farmers and businesses who use pesticides in areas such as golf courses, hotels, and termite and pest control businesses to participate.

Participants are asked to submit the Amnesty registration forms before June 26, 2009. The registration form is needed by US EPA to prepare for the volume of pesticides that will require disposal. Registration forms are available at http://www.deq.gov.mp/article.aspx?secID=7&artID=172.

DEQ is currently working with the DLNR–Division of Agriculture, NMC-CREES, DPW-Division of Solid Waste and the Mayor Offices of Saipan, Tinian and Rota to organize the local efforts for the disposal program. ***(PR)***

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Saipan High School Summer Course

June 17 - 30, 2009
8:30am to 3:30pm Monday – Friday

Division of Fish & Wildlife Conference Room
Lower Base, Saipan, MP 96950

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Sponsor: Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council
Funding Provided through NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program
Award Number NA08NMF4410467

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Special Notes

- Neighbor island students must arrange own air transportation and accommodation;
- Students are responsible for their own lunch;
- Students must participate in all lessons / activities and be able to participate in future workshops as scheduled permits;
- Students must be entering or finishing grades 10 to 12;
- Parental consent and waiver forms must be completed;
- Registration limited to 12 to 15 students

For more information & application form, contact Richard B. Seman at 484-4986, 288-4132 or Mr. Jack Ogumoro at the Department of Lands & Natural Resources in Lower Base, Saipan Telephone (670) 322-9830/34, Fax (670) 322-2633, or by email at: marfishmag@gmail.com

SHEFA scholarship for nursing students pushed

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Oscar M. Babauta (Cov-Saipan) is proposing to authorize Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance scholarship for nursing students in the CNMI, two months after a local law was signed authorizing SHEFA scholarship for those enrolled at the Northern Marianas Trades Institute.

Babauta pre-filed House Local Bill 16-36 to authorize SHEFA scholarship for students enrolled in postsecondary vocational or training programs for students pursuing a degree or certification in nursing or any other related medical program within the CNMI.

Northern Marianas College, Emmanuel College and the University of Loyola at CNMI currently offer nursing courses.

In Babauta's bill, those eligible for SHEFA are U.S. citizens or U.S. permanent residents who have resided on Saipan for at least a year before applying for SHEFA and who are attending or have been accepted for enrollment at an institution of higher education or a trades type institution such as NMTI or other institutions offering nursing in the CNMI.

SHEFA and CNMI Scholarship have been traditionally available to those who have obtained high school diplomas or a high school equivalent.

Recently, Saipan Local Law 16-8 increased the scope of financial aid recipients to include those without a high school diploma or its equivalent who have enrolled in a trade-type institution.

Babauta said many in the community would like to pursue nursing, hoping to find rewarding work after graduation and competitive wages in the CNMI's hospitals and clinics.

"The purpose of this act is to clearly and expressly permit financial assistance to those who have chosen to pursue a career in nursing or other related medical occupations," said Babauta.

Unlike the bill granting SHEFA scholarship to trades institute students, Babauta's bill does not provide a condition that those receiving SHEFA should stay and work in the CNMI for a certain time in exchange for the scholarship money.

Since its inception in 2004, SHEFA has yet to track down all the beneficiaries to see if they met the conditions.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd Floor Joeten Commercial Building, Gualo Rai
Saipan, MP 96950

ADDENDUM 1
DPW09-IFB-019

PUERTO RICO DUMP FINAL CLOSURE SAIPAN, MP

1. **General:** The following revisions, additions, corrections, and/or clarifications to the specifications and drawings shall apply to the work affected thereby. Careful note of this Addendum shall be taken by the bidder/contractor, and all trades affected shall be fully advised of the information contained herein. In the event of a conflict between drawings, specifications and this Addendum, the contents of this Addendum shall govern. All further conflicts in the work resulting from, or caused by, the contents of this Addendum must be brought to the attention of the Contracting Officer for resolution. **Failure to acknowledge this bid Addendum in accordance with instructions may subject your bid to rejection on the affected item(s)/service(s).**

2. **Pre-Bid Conference:** A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at ***Thursday, June 11,2009 at 10:00 a.m. local time at the Solid Waste Management Division's Lower Base Transfer Station, Lower Base, Sa/pan, MP.***

3. **All Questions:** All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time ***Thursday, June 18, 2009*** to Mr. Steve Hiney, Contracting Officer's Technical Representative, Lower Base Transfer Station, or fax to (670) 322-2762.

4. **Sealed Bids:** must be marked "DPW09-IFB-019". For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 10:00 a.m. July 6,2009. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notice of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 9:00 a.m. local time July 6, 2009, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-Mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than July 6, 2009, and must be received no later than July 15, 2009. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

5. **Bid Opening:** Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. local time, July 16,2009, However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids wil1 be opened at 10:00 a.m. local time, on July 6, 2009

All other requirements of the Invitation for Bids of the project package remain as stated.

/s/ DIEGO B. SONGSONG
Secretary of Public Works

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Friday, June 12, 2009, at 10:00 a.m. in the CPA Conference Room, Second Floor, Captain George F. Fleming Building at the Port of Saipan, Saipan.

The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes (May 27, 2009)

II. SPECIAL AGENDA ITEMS
1. Personnel Matter: Contract Renewal
2. Part-time employment (Engineering, Architectural and Accounting positions)

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

V. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/s/ EFRAIN F. CAMACHO, P.E. June 10, 2009
Executive Director

Louisa L. Taga
P.O. Box 501156
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No. 288-1494

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE MATTER OF THE APPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH B. TAGA & LOUISA L. TAGA AS GUARDIAN OF THE ESTATE OF JOSEPH L. TAGA JR., Minor Child,	**FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 09-0309**
By: **JOSEPH B. TAGA & LOUISA L. TAGA,** Petitioners.	**NOTICE OF HEARING**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardian for the estate of the above-named minor child by Joseph B. TAga and Louisa L. Taga, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will be held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Superior Court before the Honorable Kenneth L. Govendo on the 29th day of June, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. or as soon as thereafter.

/s/ Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

Joanna B. Taga
P.O. Box 501156
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No. 288-1493

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE MATTER OF THE APPOINTMENT OF JOANNA B. TAGA AS GUARDIAN OF THE ESTATE OF JUSTIN KOBE BABAUTA TAGA, Minor Child,	**FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 09-0313**
By: **JOANNA B. TAGA,** Petitioner.	**NOTICE OF HEARING**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardian for the estate of the above-named minor child by Joanna B. Taga, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will be held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Superior Court before the Honorable Kenneth L. Govendo on the 22nd day of June, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. or as soon as thereafter.

/s/ Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

Jeanette Babauta
P.O. Box 501156
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No. 288-1493

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE MATTER OF THE APPOINTMENT OF JEANETTE BABAUTA AS GUARDIAN OF THE ESTATE OF SOREENA DOLORES BABAUTA AND SHANIA MARIE BABAUTA, Minor Children,	**FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 09-0314**
By: **JEANETTE BABAUTA,** Petitioner.	**NOTICE OF HEARING**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardian for the estate of the above-named minor children by Jeanette Babauta, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will be held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Superior Court before the Honorable Kenneth L. Govendo on the 22nd day of June, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. or as soon as thereafter.

/s/ Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

Jamie Lynn Taga
P.O. Box 501156
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No. 288-1493

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE MATTER OF THE APPOINTMENT OF JAMIE LYNN TAGA AS GUARDIAN OF THE ESTATE OF RYHAN JAKE B. TAGA JOHNSON T. ALAM, Minor Child,	**FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 09-0315**
By: **JAMIE LYNN B. TAGA,** Petitioner.	**NOTICE OF HEARING**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardian for the estate of the above-named minor child by Jamie Lynn B. Taga, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will be held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Superior Court before the Honorable Kenneth L. Govendo on the 22nd day of June, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. or as soon as thereafter.

/s/ Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

JUNE 11, 1999

Dynasty wants power rate cut

It may take a while for the new power plant on Tinian to provide electricity to its biggest customer as the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino asked for leeway from the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation in view of its shaky financial condition. The problem-ridden casino has apparently appealed for waiver of fees and lower power rate as part of the terms if they decide to hook up with the 10-megawatt plant that opened last February. The power plant had been specifically planned by CUC to address the needs of Dynasty and the Voice of America relay station which, under their agreement with the CNMI government, must source their electricity only from Tinian's main system despite having their own generators.

Bill on FAS draws protest from Palau

A top Palau official has reiterated opposition against a pending legislation that will put in place a government monitoring system for Freely Associated States citizens residing in the Northern Marianas. House Speaker Ignacio Anastacio said both CNMI and Guam should address the issue on the costs of hosting their nationals to the federal government, adding Palau expects to get involved when the Compact is renegotiated later this year. "It's unfortunate," he told reporters, referring to the proposed measure under way in the CNMI Legislature seeking restriction on the migration of FAS citizens into the island.

JUNE 11, 2001

Candidates support 50%+1 vote proposal

Gubernatorial tandems would face difficulty winning this year's race if legislation is approved imposing a run-off election between the two highest vote getters. The issue is one of securing the mandate of the majority of the voting public in the Northern Mariana Islands. Republican Party Chair Joe Reyes said that despite the intention of the bill to get the peoples' mandate, candidates will have a hard time getting the necessary votes to win the election. This is especially hard when there are five candidates vying for gubernatorial and Washington representative posts, said Reyes in an interview.

PDL, govt sued over project

The Saipan Grand Hotel is seeking compensatory and punitive damages against Pacific Drilling Limited and two government agencies for alleged failure to remedy a mess caused by a public works project. The plaintiff has filed civil suit against Commonwealth Utilities Corporation and the Commonwealth Ports Authority, the public agencies who contracted PDL to work on a public works project at As Lito. The defendants were accused of tearing down a fence and negligently excavating a portion of the septic tank leaching field under the plaintiff's property. The barracks houses more than 50 of its employees.

JUNE 11, 2002

A casino on Saipan?

Saipan could soon muscle in on the fiercely competitive casino industry, with the introduction of a bill that seeks to authorize casino operations in the Third Senatorial District. Senate Local Bill 13-7, a pre-filed measure authored by Sen. Ramon S. Guerrero, made its first legislative appearance during the upper chamber's Friday session on Rota. The measure apparently arises from a perceived need to jump-start the local economy, whose sluggish recovery has become a worrisome refrain among government officials and lawmakers. The proposed Saipan Casino Act of 2002 would primarily create a Saipan Casino Commission within the Office of the Mayor, which would regulate and control casino operations on Saipan; and a Northern Mariana Islands Descent Investment Inc., a for-profit corporation that would establish the casino itself.

Talks to rehabilitate BoS continue

Attorney General Robert T. Torres yesterday advised Bank of Saipan trustee David J. Lujan to secure a lawyer when participating in any discussion regarding the bank's rehabilitation plan. In his letter to Lujan, Torres said there are civil and criminal penalties attending the case apart from the purely commercial issues, which may necessitate the presence of a legal counsel. "In meetings regarding the Bank of Saipan, please have counsel for yourself or JLH Trust present. Counsel would be able to advise you as to any liability or legal issues which may arise during discussions," Torres told Lujan in a letter.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Hostages

Laura Ling and Euna Lee are American journalists who traveled to northern China in March to tackle a tough and important story: the trafficking of North Korean women to China. Their work would have been risky at any time. But the two reporters for San Francisco-based Current TV happened to undertake their mission at a time when North Korean dictator Kim Jong Il is seeking to provoke the Obama administration. The result: Ms. Ling, 32, and Ms. Lee, 36, were taken prisoner by North Korea on March 17 in as-yet-unexplained circumstances and this week were sentenced to 12 years in a labor camp by one of Mr. Kim's courts. They are, in a very real sense, hostages—condemned to be separated from their families and confined in what may be harsh conditions until a regime that seeks political and economic concessions from Washington chooses to release them.

The treatment of these courageous women ought to give pause to those who argue that North Korea is susceptible to offers of "engagement"; that it seeks normal political and economic relations with the United States and other Western countries. In holding the women, Mr. Kim—who in the past two months has also violated multiple U.N. resolutions by firing a long-range missile and detonating a nuclear warhead—is demonstrating that his regime has changed little since the days when it systematically abducted citizens of Japan and other countries. No wonder the Japanese government this week urged the Obama administration to put North Korea back on the State Department's list of terrorism sponsors. The designation was lifted last year by the Bush administration in a desperate effort to keep alive negotiations over North Korea's nuclear program, but Pyongyang never delivered on the reciprocal steps it promised.

To its credit, the Obama administration has been signaling that it will not respond to Mr. Kim's provocations by offering bribes, as the previous two administrations did. The North Korean dictator has fallen into a routine of provoking a crisis whenever he needs fresh aid or wants to shore up his domestic political position; that pattern needs to be broken. Humanitarian considerations in the case of these two journalists could justify the dispatch of a special envoy to obtain their release; former Vice President Al Gore, the co-founder of Current TV, would be a logical choice. But no ransom of economic aid or political concessions should be given. Instead, the administration should find ways to squeeze the regime financially—as the Bush administration did at one time—and press China to support substantial U.N. sanctions or use its considerable bilateral leverage over Pyongyang. One good way for Beijing to send a message would be to relax controls along the border and invite international aid workers to assist the desperate women and other refugees whom Ms. Lee and Ms. Ling were investigating. Mr. Kim could not endure such a policy for long.

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The Dark Force

By Rik and Janel Villegas

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC. They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.

Our family recently held a *Star Wars* movie marathon where we watched an episode each evening for a week. The supernatural ability of both the Jedi and Sith monastic orders comes from a cosmic Force that permeates the universe. The Jedi Knights draw upon the light side of the Force, and believe it is aligned with compassion, courage, and benevolence. Whereas the Sith embrace the dark side of the Force, which is believed by the Jedi to align with fear, hatred, and aggression. The traditional Jedi attempt to keep the Force in balance by destroying the Sith and denying the dark side.

A generation prior to the first Star Wars movie, a social psychologist by the name of Kurt Lewin developed a concept called "Force Field Analysis" to look at the variables involved in planning and implementing change. Instead of using the terms "light side" and "dark side", he used "driving" and "restraining" to describe the forces that act upon an organization.

He viewed organizations as systems in which the present situation was a dynamic balance of forces working in opposite directions. The balance between these two opposing forces creates equilibrium, and over time this becomes the status quo. Changing the force strength on either side has the capacity to upset the balance and either drive your business in a positive direction to achieve organizational goals, or restrain your company from realizing its potential.

Forces can be tangible resources such as money, equipment, technology, or customers. However, the intangible forces are sometimes the most powerful, and can have the greatest impact on your organization. They include things such as public opinion, habits, customs, attitudes, trends, policies, or social norms. These forces can act at various levels (personal, project, organizational) to work in favor for, or against change initiatives in a "tug-of-war" battle.

The power of Force Field Analysis is unleashed when your organization is able to identify all the forces acting on your company, accurately assess the balance of power, determine the most important stakeholders as either allies or opponents, and strategize how to influence target groups and create a new balance that favors your organization.

To conduct a Force Field Analysis, you should understand your current status and situation, and then articulate and communicate your desired future situation. Next, list all the forces that will drive you toward your desired situation, and all the forces that could restrain your efforts. Give each force a score between 1 to 5, with 1 representing a weak force, and 5 equaling an extremely strong force. Now draw a line in the middle of a paper that represents the equilibrium point in your current situation, and place arrows representing the driving forces pushing the line to the right, and restraining forces that push the line to the left. Total each side to determine if the forces are greater on the light or dark side.

Consider how any change in these forces will change the balance, and what affect it will have on your organization. Even if you do things to enhance your driving forces, it may trigger an equal or greater resistance in the restraining forces. For example, if you hire a law firm to sue a company or the government that is seen as an opponent, it may only prompt the opposing group to bring in their legal beagles to defend or counter sue; thereby stymieing your efforts. If you put greater pressure on employees to perform without treating them fairly, it may create short-term improvements, but it could prompt increased absenteeism, resignations, or sabotage that will hinder long-term progress.

Some businesses are "stuck" because they've stopped making progress due to external or internal forces. They feel stuck because of the economy and its debilitating affects. Some are stuck because they've lost customers who have moved or switched allegiance to their competitors. Perhaps they have a flawed business model that worked a few years ago, but has not proven useful due to changes in technology, buyer behavior, regulations, or other factors.

Other dark forces acting on businesses can come from fear of the unknown or discouragement due to poor performance, rising costs, listless employees, or unfair practices to name a few. These forces can gradually build until they create a negative momentum that seems overpowering.

You don't have to be a Jedi Knight to overcome the dark forces. Oftentimes, this can happen quickly and inexpensively through a change in strategy, a positive attitude, improving relationships among key stakeholders, effective training for staff, or treating people fairly. Eliminating dark forces allows the driving forces to have unimpeded influence. Once you remove your constraints it's like taking the brakes off your business to effortlessly move you toward your goals. A residual effect is that a restraining dark force may convert into a driving force for your company. Effectively dealing with employee grievances or motivation problems will turn their lackadaisical effort from a restraining force into a highly motivated workforce. Opponents who become allies can greatly help you toward your goals.

May the Force be with you.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The struggle

By STEPHEN B. SMITH
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Stephen B. Smith is the Accreditation, Language Arts, and National Forensic League coordinator for the Public School System Central Office. E-mail him at saipansmith1940@yahoo.com.

You see it every day, hundreds of people walking, running, biking up and down the beach pathway. I know it, I see it, I'm one of them. They're there for any of several reasons. Mobile meditation, reasons relating to health and fitness, burning calories, even socializing. It is quite a show.

In my case it's a combination of active meditation and calorie burn. I was told by my doctor not too long ago that exercise would help the weight thing and it would help in the fight against cholesterol as well; you gotta love it! The good thing about using the pathway is that there is no downside to using it. It's free and it works for you.

Exercise and weight control is a big thing. It makes sense to not overdo it, of course, and to have your doctor aware of what you're doing or intend to do. The latter is true especially if you're a hundred years old—like me. I walk four miles a day; it takes me 80 minutes at three miles per hour and I burn 580 calories in the doing. That's a pound a week on the fat burning scale, i.e., 3,500 calories equals one pound of fat.

In addition to the exercise, I have an associate who is a registered nutritionist. I have talked to her at length about the dietary end of things. Well, you probably guessed it: Dietarily speaking, it's a matter of fiber-fiber-fiber! Attempting to do large-scale weight reduction by exercise alone is probably not going to work for most people, not in the long run. So greens, high-fiber fruits, grains, and a lot of water is the prescription. That part is the struggle! And it's a monstrous one.

Oprah Winfrey is a celebrity who periodically does the weight reduction thing. She of course has a private chef, exercise gurus, and genius doctors on call 24/7. The rest of us have to do it on our own. Denzel Washington just lost 50 lbs, claims the current (June) issue of *Reader's Digest*. But he, like everybody's good friend Oprah, has advantages that you and the population at large and I are not so fortunate to be afforded. There is no justice!

I have been on a mission since the first of January to lose 50 lbs by the end of the year. I am gritting my teeth, pacing back in forth in my living room repeating like a Buddhist mantra, "I will not fail, I will not fail, I will not fail!" Like I said, I am on a mission. Since the beginning of the year I have lost 14 lbs—down from 234 to my current weight of less than svelte 220. I have determined that I need to do something dramatic to get myself off my current plateau weight-wise: I am going to publish my progress monthly until the end of the year. Like I said, I am on a mission.

The struggle is actually a war of sorts. I am constantly at this or that feed because of the kind of work that I do. I am going to be begging off most of them. I see them, the feeds, as communist plots to keep America overweight and unhealthy. Well, I'm in full rebellion. I am in attack mode. I am on the offensive to no longer be "offensive." I shall not fail. I shall overcome. I am determined to look better than my wife—5'2" and 105. She laughs at me, but I will have the last laugh. I have narrowed my eyes and I am in a fighter's stance. Yes, and having a twin brother like Arnold; well, it's inspiring.

Okay, I gotta go; It's noon, and I have to build myself an inspirational salad! I shall struggle on to ultimate success.

Tiananmen SOS International

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section.*

The SOS distress signal of 3-dots, 3-dashes, 3-dots in Morse code served the shipping community for a while, thus the "Save our Ship" decoding of the code. "Send out Succor" later became a universal request for assistance in the English world, and elevated to religious fervor, the signal became "Save our Souls" among Christian evangelists. In the electronic music media, Sound-on-Sound is more the lingo of the DJs; "Showing Off Sinoland" might very well be the motif of today's China since it went on display in the Beijing 2008 Olympics, and its apparent posturing to augment or even replace the U.S. dollar currency as the informal international medium of exchange.

June 4 was the 20th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square incident. There was hardly a shake felt in Shenyang, let alone a tremor, at the SOS International Club where I spent Thursday's evening of non-local awareness, let alone recognition, of a two-decade old wail heard and insurrection seen around the world.

Having lived through the Makati-supported middle-class EDSA revolt in Metro Manila in the so-called People's Power of 1986, and continuing with the massive text-messaging phenomenon in the *Erap-ng-masa* expulsion of 2001, (aka, Edsa II) I am quite clear about the power of media images' accenting the importance of an event beyond its natural impact when left alone.

The current hysteria, for instance, of the two journalist of Korean descent who were sentenced to 12 years labor, being drummed up by the Associated Press as pawns in the DPKR geopolitical strategy vis-a-vis the United States, does not really merit serious ink. The account, to begin with, does not say where the journalist were taken other than hint that they might have been abducted by rogue North Korean forces who allegedly have a knack for breaking out of ranks and going into forays of preying on innocent bystanders!

The account suggest that the journalists were following stories on human trafficking (a highly emotional topic) in an area where economic choices are limited, and commercial entrepreneurship in sex is claimed to be a coerced choice. It then rehearses the DPRK's dismal record of the last four decades, skewing any mention that perhaps, the two ladies did violate someone else's geographical sovereignty. Worse, they are doing this shameless manipulation of emotions through the umbrella of Al Gore's connection to their employ.

Having just contemplated crossing the border to North Korea from Dandong, and not politically inclined to justify anything the spoilt tweenies of three generational Kims, I have nevertheless less sympathy for the red-white-and-blue bullies picking on the small time rogues (26-yr. old Kim Jong-un is still in training) who are trying to pick up their pride after they had been systematically excluded from world play!

Anyway, at the SOS International Club in Shenyang, the young people were there just to have fun, mix two 500ml tea with one bottle of Black label, get fuzzy and sake one's booty away. One of the songs did sound like a *We are the World* type of a message because the crowd started swaying with flickering lights from cigarette lighters. That's the closest thing to a remembrance to Tiananmen that I can deduce, if that in fact, is what they were doing.

I still remember one 1989 November morning sauntering into the unguarded Chairman's mausoleum where they did not yet check your ID before reaching the somber line, just a few months after a 'crazy - *zhen jin bin'* young man stood in front of a Ben Xi made anti-Sherman tank one previous June night on the Square. With a handful of diplomatic passport-carrying dependents originating from Manila on an officially guided tour of the city, and the then still rice fields of Pudong in Shanghai (now the financial center of the East competing against London and New York), exotic Xi'an of the Silk Road renown with its newly excavated Shi Huangdi terra cotta soldiers, Suzhou and Hanzhou of the water canal fame, we were witness to the infant stage of the tourism deluge that followed Deng Xiaopeng opening of the gates.

Returning in 2001, Tiananmen was contending with the *Falun Gong* crowd banned in 1999 that touched a raw nerve of the Chinese yearning for individual expression and strained China's rhetoric of religious tolerance.. After the much-publicized Tibetan protests prior to the Beijing Olympics 2008, gleefully fanned by Western media, and now in 2009, with the Paris mayor conferring honorary citizenship to the Dalai Lama, the Square have seemingly posted as many security personnel as there are local and foreign tourists snapping their newly acquired digital cameras for tomorrow's memories.

Last Sunday evening I strolled through the *hutongs* (small alleys) around the *Gu Gong* (the Imperial Palace-Forbidden City), and saw again the disparity that exists between the 20 percent of the Chinese who has access to 80 percent of the nation's new wealth, to the 80 percent of the population who will have to share the remaining 20 percent. The former were imperial as they dined in fancy restaurants while the latter lived in squalor. The mathematics might not be precise but the experience is convincing as I spent the last 29 days traveling around the newly industrialized *Dong Bei* (North East) of the old Manchuria, inclusive of Harbin in Heilongjiang, Changchun of Jilin, Shenyang, Dandong, Dalian of Liaoning, the last stop on the reinvigorated and global city of the Municipality of Beijing, in contrast to its surrounding rural communities that cannot be excluded from the new prosperity descending on the land of the Hans.

A gnawing sense remains that the whole nation, with its new D-series of trains that cut traditional rail travel in half and can now traverse various ends of the country to another, remains like one big Tiananmen Square, with all its security apparatus unclear who it is that it is guarding itself from.

China carries within itself its own contradiction. If distributive justice is not heeded for its masses, and the clear dichotomy between the nouveau riche urban centers and rural poor remains, the human instinct for the recognition of human dignity that Tiananmen has come to signify, will definitely rise again. More importantly, SOS Tiananmen for distributive justice in China is also SOS International for distributive justice in the rest of the world.

Letters to the Editor

Primary job preference

I cannot help but respond to the letters to the editor from the three people who talked about primary job preference application in the CNMI based upon the newly enacted Public Law 15-108.

I also saw a news clip from KSPN 2 News of a man who has been on a job search for a year and still has not found one despite the enormous listing of employers to whom he responded. This news clip briefly touched on the application of incentive hiring and fewer than five people within an employer's premise.

What a mess, huh? For many years U.S. citizens and permanent residents have been victims of the primary job preference requirement, from the lame excuse that we are lazy and do not come to work, to being overqualified for the job. Employment Services has been successfully intervening in many cases and many of these U.S. citizens will attest that if it weren't for them, we would still have no job at present. I know what I am saying. I am a recipient of their services. Leaders should wake up and intervene on issues that block off employment opportunities for U.S. citizens and permanent residents instead of adding to the barriers that continue our unemployment within the private sector. We should revisit the existing laws and implement policies to increase our opportunities instead of diminishing them. We must stop the belief that there are more protections provided by the new law when the law diminishes them.

I just learned from a friend that they were denied jobs at a certain company. This employer was advertising for a kitchen helper, among other jobs. We applied for the job, but then we were called by Employment Services personnel and were informed that the company will not entertain our application because they have availed of a "Claim of Exemptions" from the Director of Labor that waives the application of the primary job preference for U.S. citizens and permanent residents to compete for these job opportunities. Who is the Director of Labor to deny us our employment opportunities? Somebody has to look into this situation. He is hurting us and not helping our economy as well. What is going on here? Where is the protection that everyone talked about? Where is the economic stabilization? Leaders, remember that the employment of nonresident workers is not the only element to stabilize our economy, but the employment of resident workers as well. Doesn't it make sense to you that the more we put resident workers on the job, the more they will be spending their money and continue generating prosperity within the same society?

Leaders, help us! We ask that you put your minds together and approach this with the mindset that we are presently in an unfortunate economic situation. All we are asking for is give us better protection than what is being claimed. Enough is enough, please!

Frederick Guerrero
Navy Hill, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds around 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds around 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds around 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲89° ▼79°	▲89° ▼79°	▲89° ▼79°	▲88° ▼79°	▲88° ▼78°

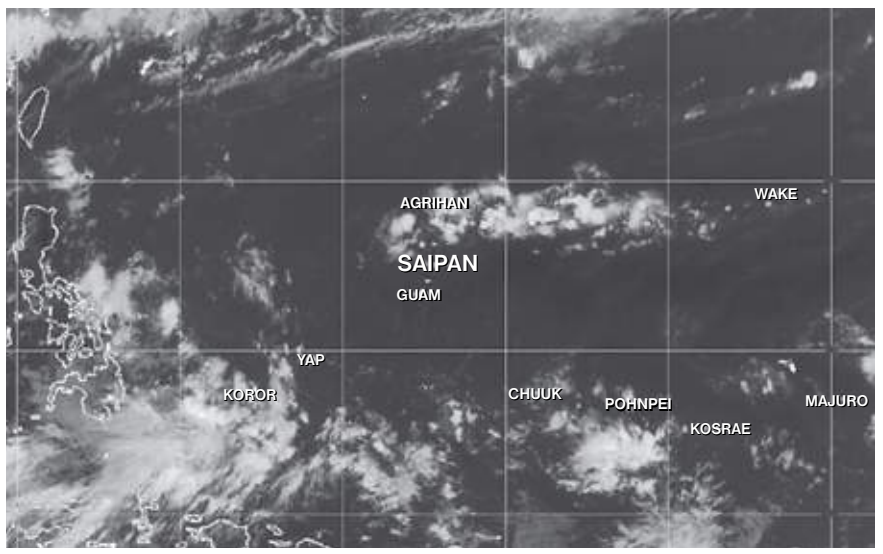
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Sunny	▲86	▼76
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼77
Yap	Rain	▲87	▼77
Chuuk	Rain	▲87	▼78
Pohnpei	Rain	▲85	▼74
Kosrae	Rain	▲86	▼78
Majuro	Rain	▲83	▼78

Around The Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲63	▼56
Beijing	Sunny	▲91	▼63
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼79
Honolulu	Cloudy	▲83	▼74
London	Cloudy	▲66	▼46
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	▲74	▼58
Manila	Rain	▲86	▼78
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲56	▼45
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼78
New York	Thunderstorms	▲75	▼66
Osaka	Cloudy	▲83	▼62
Paris	Cloudy	▲66	▼48
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲82	▼60
Rome	Sunny	▲82	▼61
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲73	▼53
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲66	▼54
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲72	▼60
Tokyo	Showers	▲81	▼65
Washington, DC	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼71

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A monsoon trough arcs southeastward from 13N130E through a weak circulation centered at 4N139E to end at EQ155E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are found over Koror near the trough and circulation within 200 miles of a line from 8N130E to EQ147E. Convergence along a weak shear line stretches westward from Wake Island to the Northern Marianas Islands west of Anatahan. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms can be found along and up to 200 miles north of a line from 16N143E to 18N161E. A near-equatorial trough extends eastward from 1N155E through a weak circulation centered at 1N158E to end at 3N166E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are found near Pohnpei and Chuuk between 8N and 1N from 151E to 159E. A surface trough stretches southward across the Marshall Islands from 13N170E to 3N174E. Scattered showers are located east of the trough axis and Majuro between 10N and 4N from 171E to 180.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

4:14 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet
8:33 AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
4:09 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
11:24 PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	5:46 AM	6:47 PM
Friday	5:46 AM	6:47 PM
Saturday	5:46 AM	6:48 PM
Sunday	5:47 AM	6:48 PM
Monday	5:47 AM	6:48 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	9:34 PM	8:22 AM
Friday	10:13 PM	9:12 AM
Saturday	10:50 PM	10:01 AM
Sunday	11:26 PM	10:48 AM
Monday		11:36 AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
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- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 9, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7

SAIPAN-GUAM

CO9317	4:30am	5:20am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1, 7
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	4, 5
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

CO9598	2:20am	2:50am	5, 6
CO9312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-PALAU (ROR)

CO893	5:50pm	6:50pm	3, 5
CO953	6:50pm	7:50pm	1, 7
CO953	7:35pm	10:05pm	2, 4, 6

PALAU (ROR)-MANILA

CO893	7:35pm	9:10pm	3, 5

GUAM-MANILA

CO893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via ROR
CO933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR111	6:00am	7:45am	1, 2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW99	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW78	9:00am	2:05pm	Daily via NGO
NW75	3:50pm	6:25am	Daily

GUAM-NARITA (NRT)

CO961	6:35am	9:10am	Daily
NW83	8:00am	1:55pm	Daily via KIX
CO6	12:00pm	2:45pm	Daily
NW73	4:05pm	7:00pm	Daily
CO963	4:35pm	7:15pm	Daily

SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)

OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	1
OZ119	4:20am	7:00am	4,6

GUAM-OSAKA (KIX)

NW83	8:00am	10:45am	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW78	9:00am	11:40am	Daily

GUAM-NAGOYA (NGO)

CO971	7:45am	10:30am	Daily
NW23	4:10pm	7:05pm	Daily
CO975	4:35pm	7:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:50am	6:30am	excl 1
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	1 via KIX
OZ119	4:20am	11:20am	4, 6 via KIX

SEOUL (ICN)-HONG KONG

OZ721	9:05am	11:45am	Daily
OZ723	7:45pm	10:30pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-MANILA

OZ701	8:35am	11:25am	Daily
OZ703	7:50pm	10:50pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

CO9598	3:25am	4:00am	5, 6
CO9312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

CO9316	2:20am	3:10am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
CO9598	2:20am	4:00am	5, 6 via ROP
CO9596	7:00am	5:00am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily x6
CO9312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	1, 4, 5, 7
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

CO9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1, 7

PALAU (ROR)-GUAM

CO954	1:10am	5:30am	3, 5, 7
CO954	1:45am	4:40am	1, 2
CO892	2:35am	5:30am	4, 6

MANILA-PALAU (ROR)

CO892	10:10pm	1:50am+1	3, 5

MANILA-GUAM

CO892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3, 5 via ROR
CO934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR110	10:00pm	4:00am	1, 3, 5, 6, 7

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW76	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
NW77	6:30pm	1:40am+1	Daily via NGO
NW100	7:50pm	12:30am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-GUAM

NW74	10:00am	2:50pm	Daily
CO962	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily
CO7	3:50pm	8:25pm	Daily
NW84	6:20pm	1:40am+1	Daily
CO964	8:25pm	1:00am+1	Daily
NW82	8:30pm	1:05am+1	4
NW82	8:30pm	1:20am+1	X 4

OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN

OZ120	9:55pm	2:20am+1	3, 5, 6

OSAKA (KIX)-GUAM

NW84	9:05pm	1:40am+1	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW77	9:10pm	1:40am	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-GUAM

NW24	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
CO970	11:30am	4:30pm	Daily
CO972	8:25pm	12:55am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	4, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	3, 5, 6 via KIX
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	excl 7

HONG KONG-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ724	12:30am	5:05am	Daily
OZ722	1:15pm	5:45pm	Daily

MANILA-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ702	12:45pm	5:45pm	Daily
OZ704	11:50pm	4:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Island Snapshots

GRADUATING CLASS CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Congratulations and best wishes to the MHS Graduating Class of 2009 from your Dolphin Family. Special shoutout going out to all of Mr. Cabrera's seniors. He's going to miss you a lot. Wishing you all the best of luck in the future.

ROTA'S TOP AWARDEES CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Rota Junior High School's top awardees—Principal's Leadership awardee Zahra Frazier, Board of Education awardee Dana A. Calvo, and Commissioner's awardee Romela De Guzma—are flanked by their proud parents during a promotions ceremony Friday on campus.

FULL SCHOLAR CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Marianas High School graduating senior Venetia Deleon Guerrero, center, is the recipient of a University of Phoenix full scholarship. This scholarship pays for her tuition for her undergraduate degree at the University of Phoenix. The "Paying It Forward" scholarship program is a benefit granted to James Phillips, second from right, the CNMI Teacher of the Year. Deleon Guerrero is shown here with, from left, MHS counselor Christopher Cabrera, MHS principal Karen Borja, Phillips, and MHS counselor Cherlyn Cabrera.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to Jocelyn. Greetings come from Vera and Madonna.

CONGRATULATIONS CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

We would want to congratulate Jarrod T. Manglona for completing the Traffic Crash Reconstruction Course in Florida, Jacksonville. We are very proud of you. We love you. From your wife, John-boy, Fidel Anton, and Oryn Jordan.

DISABILITY ADVOCATE CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Governor's Special Assistant for Disability Policy, Thomas J. Camacho, right, and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation staff John Alan A. Cabrera, center, pose with U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin after the National Council on Independence march and rally at the Capitol west front lawn. Sen. Harkin is a champion of disability policies enacted in Congress and was the guest speaker at the rally.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

State Independent Living Council member Tilde Rosario, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation staff Elvira Seman, Fernando Romolar, John Arriola and Governor's Special Assistant for Disability Policy & Programs Thomas J. Camacho pose with CNMI Rep. Gregorio "Kilili" S. Camacho. The purpose of the visit is part of the National Council on Independence Hill Visit Activity. The group presented several fact sheets and discussed with Sablan numerous disability legislation impacting citizens with disabilities living in the CNMI. For example: Medicaid federal matching requirement & funding cap; direct funding to the CNMI's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities; long-term family support, housing, transportation, safe schools, etc. The group informed Sablan that NCIL and other national disability organizations oppose the ADA Notification Act.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Birthday greetings go out to Davina Aldan Magofna, left, who is celebrating her 10th birthday today, June 11, 2009. She is shown here with her cousin, Patty Aldan Cepeda. Happy birthday Bina and many blessings. We love you dearly.

CLINIC WITH A HEART CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Atsuko Eck assists Dr. Ken Pierson during the Seventh-day Adventist Clinic's third annual Clinic With A Heart Day on June 1. Clinic With A Heart is a special day of free dental treatment for children and adults who live on Saipan. This free dental day is set up specifically for those who are experiencing a toothache and have no means to visit a dentist for relief.

Business

Chrysler poised to close sale, exit Chapter 11

NEW YORK (AP)—With opponents of Chrysler's planned partnership with Italy's Fiat having exhausted their appeals, the Obama administration-backed sale could close early Wednesday—putting the automaker close to its goal of a speedy exit from bankruptcy protection.

Late Tuesday, the Supreme Court cleared the way for the sale of the bulk of Chrysler LLC's assets to Fiat Group SpA, rejecting an appeal by a trio of Indiana pension and construction funds, consumer groups and others to block the transaction.

The deal will likely close early Wednesday, according to a person briefed on the company's plans who declined to be named ahead of an official announcement by the automaker. Chrysler released a statement late Tuesday saying it expects the sale to close "very shortly."

The high court's action came on the heels of statements by Chrysler and Fiat that their deal would automatically expire if the sale didn't close by June 15 and a White House warning that there was no guarantee a new agreement could be brokered in time to save Chrysler from liquidation.

The sale of Auburn Hills, Mich.-based Chrysler's assets to Fiat had been expected to close more than a week ago, but Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg decided Monday to delay the sale while studying the appeals.

AP

A Chrysler dealership listed as losing their franchise is shown with a Fiat, Chrysler and Jeep display, in Redwood City, Calif., Tuesday, June 9, 2009.

Obama: It's OK to borrow to pay for health care

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama on Tuesday proposed budget rules that would allow Congress to borrow tens of billions of dollars and put the nation deeper in debt to jump-start the administration's emerging health care overhaul. The "pay-as-you-go" budget formula plan is significantly weaker than a proposal Obama issued with little fanfare last month.

It would carve out about $2.5 trillion worth of exemptions for Obama's priorities over the next decade. His health care reform plan also would get a green light to run big deficits in its early years. But over a decade, Congress would have to come up with money to cover those early year deficits.

Obama's latest proposal for addressing deficits urges Congress to pass a law requiring lawmakers to pay for new spending programs and tax cuts without further adding to exploding deficits projected to total about $10 trillion over the next decade.

If new spending or tax reductions are not offset, there would be automatic cuts in so-called mandatory programs—although Social Security payments and the Medicaid health care program for poor and disabled would be exempt and cuts to Medicare would be sharply limited.

"The 'pay-as-you-go' rule is very simple," Obama said. "Congress can only spend a dollar if it saves a dollar elsewhere."

Last month Obama suggested a tougher plan that would prohibit Congress from swelling the deficit in one year by putting off until later years the tax increases or spending cuts to pay for it.

The requirement for legislation to be financed over the coming decade generally mirrors existing congressional rules and reflects the likelihood that Obama's health care plan will add many billions of dollars to the deficit in the early years. Savings and revenues in later years would have to make up for the initial deficits.

Banks to return $68 billion in bailout money

WASHINGTON (AP)—Ten of the nation's biggest financial companies got a green light Tuesday to return $68 billion in federal bailout money—freeing the banks from limits on executive pay and leaving the government with a small gain on the rescue cash.

While the paybacks could be a signal that the banking industry is stabilizing, analysts say it is far from a clean bill of health, and some said it was too soon to let the banks give back the money.

Presidential spokesman Robert Gibbs said the returned money would go "back into general revenue" and could even be used to bail out banks again.

Still, the government has collected $1.8 billion from dividends on shares of preferred stock it received in exchange for bailout money, he said. And the government still holds warrants to buy shares of bank stock at cut-rate prices in the future.

The $68 billion in paybacks would be the largest since the $700 billion Troubled Asset Relief Program took effect eight months ago at the peak of the financial crisis. Specifically, the money comes from a $250 billion slice of the $700 billion bailout package.

Other chunks of the $700 billion will be harder, if not impossible, to recover. Some of it, such as $70 billion funneled to failed insurer American International Group Inc., ended up in the pockets of healthier banks that did deals with AIG.

Congress subpoenas the Fed over BOA-Merrill Lynch

WASHINGTON (AP)—House lawmakers on Tuesday said they have subpoenaed the Federal Reserve to hand over e-mails, notes and other documents related to its role in Bank of America Corp.'s acquisition of Merrill Lynch & Co.

The lawmakers' subpoena comes after claims that top government officials pressured Bank of America Corp. CEO Ken Lewis to complete the bank's purchase of Merrill Lynch, threatening his job security. Lewis has testified that he had been advised by the officials, former Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, not to disclose details of Merrill Lynch's difficult financial position, according to New York State Attorney General Andrew Cuomo.

The Fed and Paulson have denied pressuring Bank of America to buy Merrill Lynch.

"We expect to respond completely and fully as requested beginning today," a Federal Reserve spokesperson said.

The subpoena by the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee comes as Bank of America's Lewis planned to testify on Thursday before the panel.

In prepared remarks, Lewis said his company had considered stopping the deal at one point because of "significant, accelerating losses" at Merrill Lynch. The bank decided to move forward with the deal after the government offered to provide assistance, he said.

"This course made sense for Bank of America and for its shareholders, and made sense for the stability of markets," Lewis said in prepared testimony. "We viewed those two interests as consistent."

Just a few weeks after the deal was completed, Bank of America's fourth-quarter earnings report showed the hit its balance sheet took on the Merrill Lynch transaction, making Lewis the target of shareholder anger.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Sunflower growers get insurance against low prices

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP)—The federal government is expanding an insurance program for sunflower farmers—two years after almost killing it—in a move that could help protect growers against fluctuating prices and low crop yields. The protection could be especially important this year as sunflower seed prices continue to fall, and some farmers contemplate planting fewer flowers. The U.S. Department of Agriculture projects an 18 percent decrease in the number of sunflower acres planted nationwide. A small sunflower crop could mean higher prices at the grocery store for cooking oil, snacks and other items made with sunflower seeds.

Oil rises to near $71 in Asia, hitting 2009 high

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices closed in on $71 a barrel Wednesday in Asia, reaching a 2009 high, as investors poured money into the commodity as a hedge against a weakening U.S. dollar and inflation. Benchmark crude for July delivery was up 70 cents at $70.71 a barrel by midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. On Tuesday, it jumped $1.92 to close at $70.01. Oil has jumped more than 100 percent in three months as traders have cheered news showing the worst of a severe U.S. recession is likely over, and have brushed off data—such as a 9.4 percent unemployment rate in May—that suggest crude demand will remain weak.

Fontainebleau Las Vegas files for Chapter 11

MIAMI (AP)—Casino-resort developer Fontainebleau Las Vegas LLC said Tuesday it has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection after failing to get certain lenders to provide about $800 million in construction funding to complete the company's $2.9 billion property on the Las Vegas Strip. Fontainebleau Las Vegas had filed a $3 billion lawsuit in April against Bank of America, JPMorgan Chase Bank, Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas and eight other lenders in an effort to access the prearranged financing to pay its 3,000 construction workers and finish the project, which is 70 percent complete and had eyed an October opening. The complaint alleged that the lenders terminated their agreement to provide an $800 million revolver loan due to one or more unspecified "events of default" by Fontainebleau. But the developers said they didn't default on any part of their agreement. Bank of America spokeswoman Shirley Norton told The Associated Press in April that the bank was discussing "restructured financing" with the company.

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA	4,008.300 Up 74.700 (+1.90%)
HONG KONG	18,442.85 Up 384.36 (+2.13%)
JAKARTA	2,111.448 Up 18.154 (+0.87%)
TOKYO	9,982.02 Up 195.20 (+1.99%)
K. LUMPUR	1,071.79 Down 1.06 (-0.10%)
MANILA	2,530.72 Up 42.46 (+1.71%)
SINGAPORE	2,373.17 Up 23.30 (+0.99%)
SEOUL	1,409.36 Up 37.52 (+2.74%)
BANGKOK	616.37 Up 8.64 (+1.42%)

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	8,763.06 -1.43
NASDAQ	1,860.13 +17.73
S&P	942.43 0.00

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.24
British Pound	0.6122
Canadian Dollar	1.1024
Chinese Renmbi	6.8327
Euro	0.7098
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7517
Indian Rupee	47.27
Indonesian Rupiah	10025
Japanese Yen	97.64
Malaysian Ringgit	3.509
New Zealand Dollar	1.5829
Philippine Peso	47.535
Singapore Dollar	1.4488
South Korean Won	1247.925
Swiss Franc	1.0772
Taiwan Dollar	32.704
Thailand Baht	34.05

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

Nation

2 killed, dozens hurt in NC Slim Jim plant blast

GARNER, N.C. (AP)—Two workers died when an explosion tore through a Slim Jim meat products plant in North Carolina Tuesday, punching holes in the building's roof and blowing employees off their feet.

The explosion critically burned four people and one worker was still unaccounted for Tuesday night. More than 40 others were taken to hospitals, including three firefighters who needed medical attention after inhaling ammonia gases that left a distinct scent around the sprawling ConAgra Foods Inc. plant just south of Raleigh.

The blast collapsed an exterior wall, smashing cars parked next to the 500,000-square-foot building.

Authorities could not say where in the plant the blast happened or what caused it, but some of the more 300 workers on duty said it chaos and panic followed.

"I was getting ready to pick up a piece of meat off the line and I felt it—the percussion. And you could feel it in my chest and my ears popped," said worker Chris Woods. "One of the guys I was working with got blown back—his hat flew backwards."

Crews searched for three missing workers through the day. Earlier, authorities said searchers had spotted one person but weren't sure if the worker was alive. One of the bodies found in the rubble was of that person.

AP

A Slim Jim meat products plant in Garner, N.C. is pictured after an explosion Tuesday, June 9, 2009.

Wake County Emergency Medical Services district chief Jeffrey Hammerstein couldn't explain how the second body was discovered. He also said one of the dead was a woman.

Searchers were in part relying on cameras and listening equipment. They were also concerned because the building was unstable, and the bodies were not immediately removed.

Frank McLaurin, a battalion chief with North Carolina Task Force 8 Urban Search-and-Rescue, said search teams crawling through spaces no higher than 30 inches would work until the last person was found. He said ammonia fumes were at acceptable levels but the area was still hazardous.

Janelle Lynch, who has worked at the plant for eight years, said she saw flames and ran. She planned to leave through the cutting department, but the roof started to collapse, so she went in the other direction and escaped through a warehouse.

"I saw a fire and things just started exploding," she said.

ConAgra spokesman Dave Jackson said someone called the plant over the weekend and threatened to start a fire. He said company officials don't believe the threat was connected to the explosion, but Garner Police Sgt. Joe Binns would not say whether police think there is a link.

"I don't want to go in that direction right now," Binns said. "We're focused on the rescue, not the investigation."

Four people were in critical condition at UNC Hospitals with burns covering between 40 percent and 60 percent of their bodies, said Dr. Charles Cairns, professor and chairman of the department of emergency medicine at the University of North Carolina.

Suspect: Recruiting center shootings justified

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP)—A Muslim convert charged with fatally shooting an American soldier at a military recruiting center said Tuesday that he doesn't consider the killing a murder because U.S. military action in the Middle East made the killing justified.

"I do feel I'm not guilty," Abdulhakim Muhammad told The Associated Press in a collect call from the Pulaski County jail. "I don't think it was murder, because murder is when a person kills another person without justified reason."

Pvt. William Andrew Long, 23, of Conway had just completed basic training and was volunteering at the west Little Rock recruiting office before starting an assignment in South Korea. He was shot dead June 1 while smoking a cigarette outside the building, and a fellow soldier, Pvt. Quinton I. Ezeagwula, 18, of Jacksonville was wounded.

Ezeagwula (eh-ZAG-u-la) spoke briefly at a news conference at a Jacksonville recruiting center Tuesday, saying he had wounds in his back, head and buttocks from the shooting.

The private, who also had just completed basic training, said he hopes to become a heavy equipment operator in the Army and later serve as a drill instructor. An Army captain repeatedly stopped Ezeagwula from answering questions about what happened during the shooting or his thoughts about the suspect.

Muhammad told the AP he admitted to his actions to police and said he was retaliating against the U.S. military.

"Yes, I did tell the police upon my arrest that this was an act of retaliation, and not a reaction on the soldiers personally," Muhammad said. He called it "a act, for the sake of God, for the sake of Allah, the Lord of all the world, and also a retaliation on U.S. military."

First Gitmo inmate in US court pleads not guilty

NEW YORK (AP)—Under heavy guard, a Guantanamo Bay detainee walked into a civilian U.S. courtroom for the first time Tuesday, underscoring the Obama administration's determination to close the Cuban prison and hold trials here despite Republican alarms about bringing terror suspects to America.

Ahmed Ghailani, a Tanzanian accused in two American Embassy bombings a decade ago, pleaded not guilty—in English—in a brief but historic federal court hearing that transported him from open-ended military detention to the civilian criminal justice system.

President Barack Obama has said keeping Ghailani from coming to the United States "would prevent his trial and conviction." Taking a drastically different stance, House Republican leader John Boehner of Ohio labeled Tuesday's move "the first step in the Democrats' plan to import terrorists into America."

Ghailani, accused of being a bombmaker, document forger and aide to Osama bin Laden, was brought to New York to await trial in connection with al-Qaida bombings that killed 224 people—including 12 Americans—at the U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998.

U.S. marshals took custody of Ghailani from his military jailers and transferred him to a federal lockup in lower Manhattan that currently holds financial swindler Bernard Madoff, and once held mob scion John "Junior" Gotti and blind terror leader Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman.

Short and slim with a wispy goatee, Ghailani walked into the courtroom without shackles or handcuffs, wearing a blue jail smock.

He listened at times through an interpreter but then removed the headphones and appeared to understand what was said in English.

Asked by the judge if he wanted her to "read this big fat indictment," he conferred with his lawyer, said it was not necessary and made his plea: "not guilty."

About 10 deputy marshals were in the courtroom, including two who were behind him.

Kan. man convicted of Craigslist rape found dead

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—A man facing nearly 30 years in prison for raping three women who had advertised on Craigslist's former "erotic services" section apparently committed suicide in his Kansas jail cell, sheriff's officials said Tuesday.

David Lee Gage, 52, of Wichita, was found dead at the Sedgwick County Jail early Monday after another inmate who was headed to breakfast looked through the window to Gage's cell and saw his motionless body, said Maj. Glenn Kurtz of the county sheriff's office.

The office did not immediately say how Gage died except to say that he apparently killed himself.

"There were no warning signals that we found," Kurtz said. "We're looking at medical files, we're looking at records, and there is nothing to indicate a trigger or warning sign that we could have seen."

Gage had pleaded for leniency when he was convicted in May, telling a judge he had health issues and didn't think he had long to live. Assistant prosecutor Justin Edwards said Tuesday that Gage "made a big point that he was thinking his life wouldn't last much longer because of a family history of short life expectancy."

ACROSS THE NATION

Slain woman's parents: LA cop's arrest was overdue

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The parents of a woman slain 23 years ago are demanding to know why it took so long for Los Angeles police to focus on one of their own as a suspect, despite several angry confrontations between their daughter and the accused veteran investigator. Detective Stephanie Lazarus, 49, is accused of killing Sherri Rasmussen, her ex-boyfriend's wife, in 1986, when Lazarus had been on the police force for two years. But when Rasmussen's father told authorities after the slaying to investigate an LAPD officer—the former girlfriend of his daughter's husband—he was allegedly told he was "watching too much TV."

Clinic closing a tainted victory for abortion foes

WICHITA, Kan. (AP)—George Tiller's slaying has accomplished what anti-abortion activists had tried to do for decades: The doors to his Kansas clinic will shut forever. The announcement Tuesday from Tiller's family was a tainted victory for the nation's anti-abortion movement. For years, it made Tiller the focus of protests, legislation and legal attacks. His death reignited a public debate over some abortion opponents' tactics and left many wondering how it will transform the abortion battleground. Now that Tiller and his clinic are gone, the epicenter of the anti-abortion movement is less clear. Kansas has long been a lightning rod in the hot-button social issue—and in 2002, the leader of the anti-abortion group Operation Rescue even moved his organization to the city to wage an aggressive campaign. With the clinic's doors closed, the movement loses one of its key protest symbols.

Okla. braces for challenge to Ten Commandments law

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—Backers of a new law authorizing a privately funded Ten Commandments monument on the grounds of Oklahoma's Capitol didn't get good news this week. A three-judge panel of the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled Monday that a similar display at the Haskell County Courthouse in Stigler was an unconstitutional endorsement of religion, prompting both sides to wonder if legal wrangling over the state law is next. Chuck Thornton, deputy director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma, the group that challenged the Haskell County display, said the group has concerns with the Oklahoma law but stopped short of saying a legal challenge was inevitable.

Asia

Bomb at luxury hotel in Pakistan kills at least 11

AP

Pakistani rescue members search for victims among the rubble of a partially collapsed hotel after an explosion in Peshawar, Pakistan,Tuesday, June 9, 2009.

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—Suicide attackers shot their way past guards and set off a massive blast Tuesday outside a luxury hotel where foreigners and well-to-do Pakistanis mixed, killing at least 11 people and wounding 70, officials said. The bombers struck the Pearl Continental Hotel at about 10 p.m., when nightlife was still in swing. The attack reduced a section of the hotel to concrete rubble and twisted steel and left a huge crater in a parking lot.

The blast came a week after Taliban leaders warned they would carry out major attacks in large cities in retaliation for an army offensive to reclaim the nearby Swat Valley region from the militants. No claim surfaced immediately for the bombing in Peshawar, the northwest's largest city with about 2.2 million people.

Earlier in the day, officials said Pakistan's military engaged militants on two fronts elsewhere in the northwest. The army dispatched helicopter gunships in support of citizens fighting the Taliban in one district and used artillery fire against militants in another after sympathetic tribal elders refused to hand them over.

Journalists unlikely to see nasty NKorean prisons

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Prisoners spend long days toiling in rice paddies and factories. Survivors say beatings are frequent, hunger is constant and clothing scarce in the freezing winter.

But experts said that based on past experiences the two American journalists sentenced to 12 years in a North Korean labor prison probably won't see this side of the nation's notoriously brutal gulag. The reporters—Laura Ling and Euna Lee—will likely be kept apart from North Korean inmates as negotiators try to cut a deal for their release.

"I don't think the reporters will do hard labor. It's simply not in the North Koreans' interests to make them go through that," Roh Jeong-ho, director of the Center for Korean Legal Studies at Columbia Law School in New York, said Tuesday.

Roh agreed with several other analysts who have said Pyongyang will likely use the women to maximize its leverage in talks with Washington. Discussions have already begun about who would represent the U.S. as an envoy, with New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson and former Vice President Al Gore named as possibilities.

ASIAN BRIEFS

SKorea pinpoints 20 illegal NKorean bank accounts

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea has informed the U.S. of up to 20 North Korean bank accounts suspected of being involved in counterfeiting, money laundering and other illegal transactions, a news report said Wednesday. The move came as Washington considered punishing the North with its own financial sanctions apart from proposed U.N. sanctions. Separately, seven key nations neared agreement on a new U.N. resolution that would toughen sanctions against North Korea for defying the Security Council and conducting a second nuclear test on May 25. South Korea gave the U.S. the information on some 10 to 20 North Korean bank accounts in China and Switzerland at Washington's request, South Korea's Chosun Ilbo newspaper reported, citing an unidentified government official.

Grenade kills 2 in Afghanistan, more than 50 hurt

ASADABAD, Afghanistan (AP)—A Russian-made grenade exploded in a crowd milling around a U.S. military vehicle crash in a busy town center in northeastern Afghanistan, killing two Afghans and wounding more than 50 people, including three U.S. troops, officials said Tuesday. The U.S. military and Afghanistan's Interior Ministry blamed the attack in the eastern province of Kunar on insurgents and said officials had photographic evidence a Russian-made grenade left over from decades of war was used. Nevertheless, many wounded Afghans angrily accused the Americans of using a grenade. While the allegation appears to have been discredited, it shows the difficult environment U.S. forces face in trying to win over conservative Afghan tribes that live near the Pakistan border.

China plans new terracotta warrior dig

BEIJING (AP)—China plans to excavate more of the life-size terracotta warriors at the famed ancient tomb of the country's first emperor, an official newspaper said Wednesday. Archeologists hope to uncover more figures of officers to add to the 1,000-plus statues already excavated, the official China Daily newspaper said Wednesday. Special care will be taken to preserve the figures' painted details, which have decayed almost entirely in those already exposed to the air. The new dig is the third undertaken since the tomb was first uncovered in 1974 outside the western city of Xi'an and will focus on a 2,152-square foot (2000-square meter) patch lying within the tomb's main pit that holds the main warrior force.

World

Airlines replace monitors after Air France crash

RECIFE, Brazil (AP)—Airlines moved quickly Tuesday to replace speed monitors like those suspected of feeding false information to the computers on Air France Flight 447 and possibly causing the plane to break up over the Atlantic Ocean.

Seventeen more bodies were pulled from the sea Tuesday, bringing the number recovered to 41. Another 187 have yet to be found. The first remains were brought to land by helicopter and will be flown to this coastal city Wednesday for identification.

Federal police began visiting families in Rio de Janeiro to collect genetic material—hair, blood, a cheek swab—to help identify the corpses.

Figuring out where the victims were seated and studying their injuries might help explain what brought down Flight 447 as it flew into thunderstorms on May 31, according to Peter Goelz, a former managing director of the National Transportation Safety Board.

With the plane's data recorders still missing, investigators have been focusing on the possibility that external speed monitors—called Pitot tubes—iced over and gave false readings to the plane's computers in a thunderstorm.

A key part of the investigation relies on a burst of 24 automatic messages the plane sent during the last minutes of the flight. The signals showed the plane's autopilot was not on, officials said, but it was not clear if the autopilot had been switched off by the pilots or had stopped working due to conflicting airspeed readings.

The L-shaped metal Pitot tubes jut from the wing or fuselage of a plane, and are usually heated to prevent icing. The pressure of air entering the tubes lets internal sensors measure the speed and angle of flight. A malfunctioning tube could mislead computers controlling the plane to dangerously accelerate or decelerate.

Air France said it began replacing the tubes on its A330 and A340 jets in May after pilots reported several incidents of icing leading to a loss of airspeed data, and that it had already replaced the Pitots in smaller A320 jets after similar problems were reported.

Iran's reformers tap energy of political 'party'

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Persian hip-hop thumps from car speakers and young hipsters—men with spiked hair and women in spike heels—dance in the streets.

It's another night and another campaign rally-turned-party for their unlikely hero: a self-styled reformist from the early years of the Islamic Revolution who is now seen as their best hope to defeat hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

But while Mir Hossein Mousavi generates the noise, passion and electricity in Tehran, Ahmadinejad has the backing of the powerful Islamic establishment and deep support in the countryside, leaving Friday's vote too close to call.

Mousavi would appear to have the momentum, drawing staggering crowds and all-night street bashes. But all that noise, fervor and electricity doesn't necessarily add up to a juggernaut, with critical stakes at play, including possible talks with Washington after a nearly three-decade diplomatic estrangement.

The post-midnight raves in Tehran's leafy suburbs are uncorking passions that seem to have caught even Mousavi by surprise. He stood in awe Monday at one end of a nearly 12-mile human chain of supporters along one of Tehran's main thoroughfares, linked by green ribbons and banners in the symbolic color of his campaign.

Iraqi accused in 5 US soldier deaths freed

BAGHDAD (AP)—The surprise release of a Shiite militant linked to the killing of five U.S. soldiers in Iraq is part of a high-stakes gambit that could result in freedom for five British hostages and a political role for a major Shiite extremist group with reputed ties to Iran.

Laith al-Khazali, a leading figure in the Asaib al-Haq, or League of the Righteous, was freed from U.S. custody over the weekend and taken to his home in Baghdad's Sadr City district, according to Iraqi officials involved in negotiations for his release.

Al-Khazali and his brother Qais were arrested in March 2007 and accused of organizing a bold raid on a local government headquarters in Karbala that killed five U.S. soldiers on Jan. 20, 2007.

Danny Chism, whose son, Spc. Johnathan Bryan Chism, was among the Americans killed, was outraged upon hearing that al-Khazali had been released. "Somebody needs to answer for it," he said from his home in Donaldsonville, Louisiana.

WORLD BRIEFS

UN: Atrocities in Somalia force 100,000 to flee

MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP)—Somalis are experiencing near-daily atrocities, including rape, the shelling of civilian areas and fighting that has forced more than 100,000 to flee their homes since May, the U.N. refugee agency said Tuesday. A surge of violence in Somalia since last month has killed about 200 people as Islamist insurgents battle the government and its allies. Insurgents are trying to topple the Western-backed government and install a strict Islamic state. "It's a critical humanitarian situation, with regular atrocities being committed," UNHCR spokesman William Spindler told reporters in Geneva. "We are particularly concerned about how the fighting is affecting a population that has already endured several decades of war."

Amazon Indians challenge Peru government over land

TARAPOTO, Peru (AP)—The Aguaruna Indians have a well-earned reputation as warriors. In pre-Columbian times they successfully resisted Inca subjugation. And during Peru's 1995 border war with Ecuador, they served as guides for the army. Those who know them weren't surprised, then, at the fierce resistance—23 officers were killed—when President Alan Garcia's government sent heavily armed police to clear several thousand Aguaruna and their Wampi cousins from an Amazon highway blockade. The ensuing turmoil has set Garcia's government on a collision course with this Andean nation's indigenous peoples.

Media: UK police officers accused of waterboarding

LONDON (AP)—A group of Scotland Yard officers were suspended after "serious allegations" about their behavior during the arrests of five suspects last year, police said Tuesday. London's police force did not go into detail, but Sky News television, The Times of London and the Daily Mail newspapers reported that six officers were accused of "waterboarding" drug suspects. None of the media identified their sources. The papers gave varying accounts of the exact technique allegedly used by police, with the Times saying that officers are accused of poured water on a cloth and placed it over a suspect's face to simulate the experience of drowning.

Environment

Greenhouses produce 21st century crops

By JERRY HIRSCH
(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

CAMARILLO, Calif.—On a coastal plain near Camarillo not far from a U.S. Navy base and an outlet mall, the future of California farming is taking shape.

Rising out of verdant acres of strawberries and artichokes between Highway 101 and the Pacific Ocean are two mammoth, high-tech greenhouses.

Climate change is a serious threat to California's $36 billion agricultural economy. The farming company behind this $50 million complex sees it as insurance against perpetual drought, volatile fossil fuel prices and resilient pests.

The facility generates its own renewable power. It hoards rainwater. It hosts its own bumblebees for pollination. And it requires a fraction of the chemicals used in neighboring fields to coax plants to produce like champions.

This fledgling movement to grow food crops in closed, sustainable environments could become as revolutionary to farming in the 21st century as California's development of massive farms was in the 20th, agriculture experts say."We are doing all of this not only because it will be good for our business but because it will be good for everyone else," said Casey Houweling, president of Houweling Nurseries, the Canadian farming company that is cultivating tomatoes at the facility, which will be fully operational in June.

The son of a Dutch immigrant farmer, the 51-year-old Houweling has helped build his family's agricultural business into one of the largest greenhouse-based growers in North America. But the California facility is no ordinary hothouse.

On a recent afternoon, he was eager to show visitors clusters of plump, sweet tomatoes hanging overhead from vines that reach high into the rafters. This arrangement allows the farm's 450 permanent employees to climb ladders to pick the fruit instead of stooping. The plants, which

LOS ANGELES TIMES

President Casey Houweling stands high above the crop in one of his new greenhouses, where pickers climb instead of stooping.

are fed individually through tubing that looks like intravenous hospital equipment, produces 20 times more fruit per acre than conventional field production.Virtually nothing is wasted in this ecosystem. Workers have dug a 4-acre pond to store rainwater and runoff. This water, along with condensation, is collected, filtered and recirculated back to each of the 20-acre greenhouses. That has cut water use to less than one-fifth of that required in conventional field cultivation. Fertilizer use has been reduced by half. There are no herbicides and almost no pesticides, and there is no dust.

Five-acres of photovoltaic solar cells supply much of the electricity to run pumps and climate controls. Thermal systems collect solar heat and warehouse refrigeration exhaust to warm the greenhouses on cool evenings. Together, the two systems generate 2.1 megawatts of electricity, enough to power 1,500 homes."We believe this is the first greenhouse in the world that is energy neutral," Houweling said.

Houweling envisions a day when greenhouses dot California's lush coastal plains, taking advantage of the abundant sunlight to grow thirsty crops such as lettuce and strawberries, using renewable energy to reduce their burden on the environment.

Until recently, that was a pipe dream. The cost of heating and cooling these structures was prohibitive for all the but most high-value specialty produce. The U.S. grows less than $1 billion worth of greenhouse fruits and vegetables annually.

But the rising expense of traditional farming is narrowing the cost gap. California farmers are coping with years of drought and fighting water wars with cities. They're also grappling with land degradation, an unstable migrant workforce and rising shipping costs.

"We are closer to parity than we have ever been," said Gene Giacomelli, a professor of agriculture and biosystems engineering at the University of Arizona in Tucson.

Still, a shift to more greenhouse farming will be slow.

"Houweling is doing the demonstration," Giacomelli said. "He is going to have to prove to himself and his banker that this is the way to go."

Although they need just a fraction of the land taken up by conventional farming, greenhouses require far greater capital investment. The expansion to Houweling's Camarillo farm—which includes the two greenhouses; the climate, energy and environmental technology; and a new packing plant—amounts to about $1 million an acre, not including the land cost.

Houweling said he expected the investment to take as many as 10 years to pay off, depending on the price of tomatoes. More tomato-linked salmonella scares and bad weather during the growing season in Florida would shorten the pay-back period.

Other entrepreneurs are likely to launch into hothouses on a smaller scale, building facilities in urban areas near New York and Chicago to supply produce to local markets, Giacomelli said.

These farms will have to be energy efficient—tapped into renewable or co-generation energy—to deal with the colder fall and spring climates, and they won't be year-round. There isn't enough sunlight from November through February to grow hothouse crops in big enough volume to pay for the heating bill.

Yet such small greenhouse farms, and the potential for even smaller, urban rooftop hothouses, will help provide for locally grown produce outside the traditional growing season in these regions, Giacomelli said.

Even so, California will probably become the center of greenhouse agriculture. With more than 300 days of sunshine annually, the climate provides an ideal year-round growing opportunity and keeps volumes high. Mild weather limits heating and cooling expenses. California's existing farm infrastructure also gives it an advantage over other locales.

"California always does agriculture big," said Giacomelli, "and it will do this big too."

The urban buzz

By PETULA DVORAK
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—Urban beekeepers, who prowl their rooftops in full beekeeper regalia, are becoming chic in the nation's capital, and their semi-secret society is less so, given the growing popularity of their peculiar and ancient hobby.

The White House recently added a hive to the South Lawn, and the Fairmont Hotel in the West End started two hives on its rooftop, where the chefs-turned-beekeepers tend their hives and wax poetic about the local honey they will drizzle on cheese and incorporate into their white chocolate mousse dish.

There are several dozen known beekeepers in the city. For years, they have tried to stay beneath the radar, uncertain about whether their neighbors would be pleased knowing several thousand stinging insects are next door.

"You know, there are lots of people in this community who think I'm crazy for talking to you," said Toni Burnham, 45, who is in her fifth summer of beekeeping and has emerged as one of the city's most prominent and vocal beekeepers.

Burnham keeps two hives atop her Washington townhouse. She tends to them on weekdays, when her neighbors are at work, slowly climbing the spiral staircase to her roof in her "bee costume," looking left and right to make sure no one is out gardening or sunbathing when she pries open the hive to check on her "girls."

She wants to keep the location of her home a secret, though she isn't breaking any laws.

Nothing specifically prohibits beekeeping here. But that was also the case in New York City, where a city health code banning animals that are "wild, ferocious, fierce, dangerous or naturally inclined to do harm" was applied to beekeepers.

Burnham is bucking the furtive, don't-ask-don't-tell ethos of city beekeeping by lobbying for legislation that protects and encourages beekeeping in the city.

She helped the city install a community hive at the Lederer Gardens in Northeast Washington and is going public with her campaign, after hiding her identity for five years as the "secret beekeeper" behind her blog, CityBees. blogspot.com.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Toni Burnham, right, watches as a beekeeper at the Franciscan Monastery in D.C. inspects one of his combs. Burnham is going public with her beekeeping campaign. "I'm not in it for the honey," she says. Her blog is CityBees.blogspot.com.

Burnham said she can become "bee-vangelical" on urban beekeeping.

Some apiarists are romantics who enrolled in beekeeping classes after reading "The Secret Life of Bees" and fantasizing about amber jars of honey.

"Almost all of them washed out once they realized that, basically, this is about dealing with insects," she said through the veil that cascaded over her head and shoulders as she worked to loosen the frames that house her colony.

Then there are those who are greatly alarmed at the global bee crisis, a worldwide epidemic of colony collapse disorder.

"I think it is fair to say that for most urban beekeepers, we see beekeeping as a means to support and enliven the environment around us, rather than an agricultural pursuit," Burham said. "I'm not in it for the honey."

Colony collapse disorder, a combination of disease and environmental factors that is slowly killing the world's honeybees, also affects pollination. "In the absence of pollinators, our urban greenscape suffers, and after that the bugs, the birds, the critters, and even the water and the people," Burnham said.

That is one reason the White House added a bee hive to the organic garden. Burham is a mentor to the White House beekeeper.

Like most things cosmopolitan, city honey can be more flavorful and more exciting than country honey.

Urban bees have to work harder to gather their pollen as they buzz from the patio herb garden to the tulip poplar by the playground and then to the linden tree that arches over the corner store.

Life & Style

Popular culture continues to embrace Amelia Earhart

By SUSAN KING
(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Famed aviator Amelia Earhart poses in this file photo.

HOLLYWOOD—There's something about Amelia Earhart.

More than seven decades after she disappeared without a trace in the South Pacific on her flight around the world, Earhart remains the most famous female aviator in history, a timeless heroine and inspiration to generations of women, filmmakers and fashionistas.

Flying was just the beginning. Earhart was also a fashion icon and designer with her close-cropped hair, pants and leather jackets. She was a leader in women's rights and the peace movement. She was a president and founding member of the Ninety-Nines—the original women's pilot organization. She was a pioneering businesswoman—a partner in both Transcontinental Air Transport and Ludington Airlines and a luggage designer—a wife (she was married to publisher George Putnam) and a writer.

"She definitely has a legacy," said Dorothy Cochrane, the curator overseeing Earhart's fire engine red Lockheed Vega, in which she flew solo across the Atlantic in 1932 and which is housed at the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

"I'm looking at my bulletin board here at a letter, and it's addressed to 'Amelia Earhart Smithsonian Institute,'" Cochrane noted recently with a laugh. "We are constantly getting schoolchildren writing. ... This year, there was a flurry of activity. There is this thing called National History Day, and all of these kids decided to select Amelia Earhart. If you are going to select aviation and if you are looking for women, she's the first one to come to mind."

Cochrane expects Earhart's legacy to soar even higher with the release of the family comedy "Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian," featuring Amy Adams as Earhart, filtered through a Katharine Hepburn-Howard Hawks screwball comedy sensibility.

"Amelia," directed by Mira Nair ("Monsoon Wedding") and starring Oscar winner Hilary Swank, is a more serious look at her life, based on three recent biographies. Richard Gere plays Putnam, who also worked to publicize his famous wife's exploits and image.

Earhart, who turned down Putnam six times before she agreed to marry him, referred to their marriage as a "partnership" with "dual control." The film will be released in the autumn.

Although Earhart has been the subject of countless books and several documentaries, very few films have been made about her.

Rosalind Russell played an Earhart-esque flier in 1943's "Flight for Freedom"; Susan Clark tackled the role in a 1976 TV movie, "Amelia Earhart"; and Diane Keaton starred in the 1994 TNT movie "Amelia Earhart: The Final Flight."

So why is Hollywood taking notice of Earhart now? Nair believes it's because Earhart "was the complete beacon of inspiration in the Depression for this country."

"It's sort of an incredible coincidence that we are in this slump," she adds. "I think it's an excellent time to remind people of the heroes that kept us afloat—more than afloat—in Amelia's time."

"I think (in the 1930s) there was such a positive attitude toward Amelia and such an embracing of her can-do enterprising spirit," said Shawn Levy, who directed "Battle of the Smithsonian" as well as the 2006 box office hit "Night at the Museum," both of which star Ben Stiller.

"That is very much the spirit we hope our movie has. So, the idea of channeling that affirmative energy—that kind of self-belief—makes her a formidable figure and for those reasons made her a formidable costar and foil to Ben Stiller."

"When we started to research her," says Thomas Lennon, who co-wrote both "Museum" films with Robert Ben Garand, "what was interesting about Amelia Earhart was a lot of people become famous after they have done things. She was famous when she was alive."

Made in cooperation with the Smithsonian and partially shot there, "Battle of the Smithsonian" finds Larry (Stiller) traveling to the site after museum pieces—including an Egyptian artifact that brings the exhibits to life at night—at the Museum of Natural History in New York are moved to storage underneath the largest museum complex in the world, in Washington. When the evil Pharaoh Kahmunrah (Hank Azaria) comes to life thanks to the artifact, he decides to take over the world. Larry heads off to the Smithsonian to help out his friends, who are being threatened by the pharaoh. Helping Larry in his quest is Earhart, who provides needed moxie.

> *Back then, women were part of families, but there were other women who had other ideas, and she was one of them. She wanted to be independent and fashion some career. Once she found aviation, she knew she wanted to do it. She was a role model as far as being a career woman, and even the career she selected was extraordinary.*

Adams says it was an amazing experience to play Earhart—even a highly fictionalized version.

"What I talked to Shawn about is what we needed for the film and what elements of Amelia's character I could bring—it was her sense of adventure and her ability to be a leader," Adams said. "She is part of that iconic idea of feminism. She really paved the way."

Earhart, who was born in 1897 in Atchison, Kan., was in the 1930s "one of the very few women to make a career in aviation," Cochrane said. "It was very difficult to be able to own and operate aircraft.

"Back then, women were part of families, but there were other women who had other ideas, and she was one of them. She wanted to be independent and fashion some career. Once she found aviation, she knew she wanted to do it. She was a role model as far as being a career woman, and even the career she selected was extraordinary."

And she was accepted into the boys' club of pilots, says Cochrane, because she was serious about aviation.

"If you were a woman and showed some real interest and talent and kept at it, you would be accepted," Cochrane said.

Earhart gained national attention in 1928 when she was the first female passenger on the Fokker Friendship, which successfully flew across the Atlantic.

She made her own nonstop solo flight across the Atlantic 77 years ago this month. Earhart also accomplished the first solo transcontinental flight by a female in 1932 and in 1935 made the first solo flight by anyone from Hawaii to the U.S. mainland.

Her disappearance—along with navigator Fred Noonan—on July 2, 1937, added to her mystique.

"It's one of the great mysteries of the 20th century," Cochrane said. "Such a famous person literally just disappearing off the face of the Earth and there is nothing left...."

Over the years, historians and researchers have mulled over what happened—one thought is that she and Noonan crash-landed on uninhabited Gardner Island and perished; during World War II, it was believed she might have been spying on the Japanese for President Franklin D. Roosevelt—that was the theme of "Flight for Freedom"—and another theory posits that she and Noonan were captured and later executed by the Japanese when their plane crashed on Saipan.

Cochrane said there are many reasons why they didn't reach their next destination of Howland Island.

"It's only two miles long and less than a mile wide," she said. "She had a very good navigator. They should have been able to find it. But they also say that she had an old map, so the island was off about six miles."

Earhart knew the risks of flying, but that never stopped her.

"She tried to keep the sky very present in her life, because she needed it like oxygen," Nair said. "She was incredibly stylish, but it was her passion with her occupation that created that particular style."

Report: Lambert talks about sex, drugs, 'Idol'

NEWYORK (AP)—"American Idol" runner-up Adam Lambert has landed the cover of Rolling Stone magazine, where he talks about sex, drugs and his "Idol" experiences. The 27-year-old singer from San Diego acknowledges in an interview that he's gay, and says it shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone. "I'm proud of my sexuality," he says. "I embrace it. It's just another part of me."

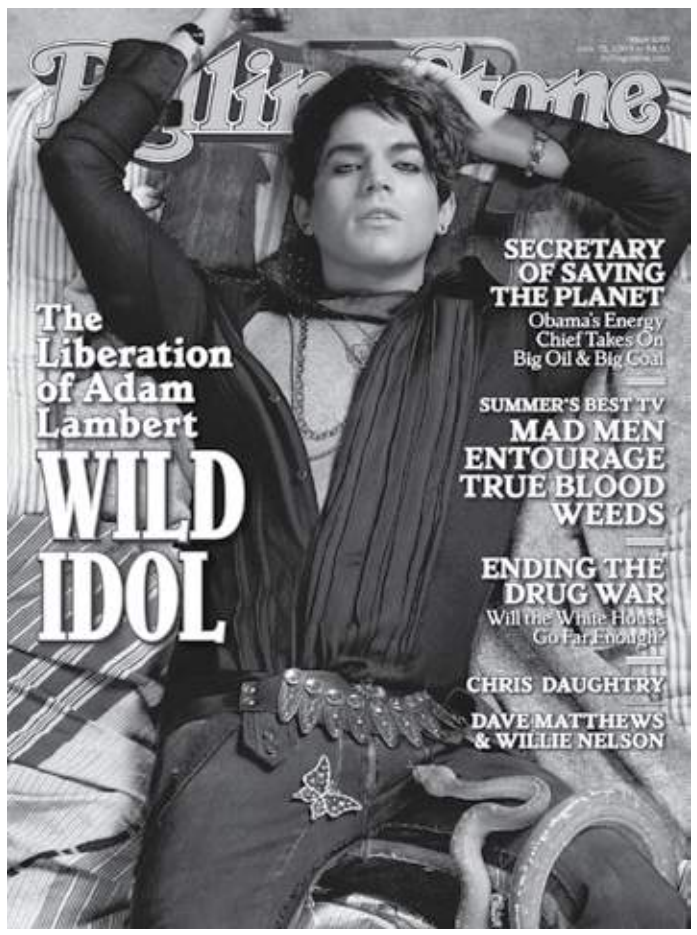
Lambert says he was inspired to audition for the Fox network singing competition after having a "psychedelic experience" at the Burning Man festival in Nevada. There, he says, he experimented with "certain funguses."

"I knew that it was my only shot to be taken seriously in the recording industry, because it's fast and broad," he says of "Idol."

Lambert emerged as an early front-runner and judge favorite, thanks in part to his soaring vocal range.

When he moved into the show's Bel-Air mansion with the other finalists, he roomed with Kris Allen, who won the "Idol" title over Lambert last month.

"I was like, 'Oh, (bleep), they put me with the cute guy,'" Lambert says. "Distracting! He's the one guy that I found attractive in the whole group on the show: nice, nonchalant, pretty and totally my type—except that he has a wife. I mean, he's open-minded and liberal, but he's definitely 100 percent straight."



AP

In this magazine cover image released by Rolling Stone, American Idol, runner-up Adam Lambert is shown on the cover of the June 25, 2009, issue, which hits newsstands on Friday, June 12.

According to Rolling Stone, Lambert was open about his sexuality backstage at "Idol." In March, photos surfaced online of Lambert kissing his ex-boyfriend.

"Going into 'Idol,' I assumed, 'OK, people are going to talk,'" he says. "I mean, I've been living in Los Angeles for eight years as a gay man, I've been at clubs making out with somebody in the corner. But photographic evidence? Didn't count on that. Wasn't ready for that."

He says he worried that a public announcement would overshadow his singing, so he decided not to respond and largely kept his personal life under wraps on the show.

"I'm an entertainer, and who I am and what I do in my personal life is a separate thing," he says. "It shouldn't matter. Except it does. It's really confusing."

Lambert says he isn't interested in being the poster child for gay rights. "I'm trying to be a singer, not a civil-rights leader." He also reveals that he began smoking pot and tried Ecstasy for the first time while performing in a European production of "Hair" in his early twenties.

"I've finally checked in to my self-worth for the first time in my life, and the fact that it has coincided with 'Idol' is so sweet," he says. "I mean, I still have moments where I think, 'Oh, my skin is terrible, and I'm a little fat, I should really go to the gym more.' But for the most part, when I look in the mirror now, I finally see someone who can do something cool."

Picasso book of sketches stolen from Paris museum

PARIS (AP)—A red notebook of 33 pencil drawings by Pablo Picasso has been stolen from a specially locked glass case in the Paris museum that bears the painter's name, authorities said Tuesday.

The book is believed to be worth 8 million euros ($11 million), a police official said.

The theft took place between Monday and Tuesday morning at the Picasso Museum, removed from a glass case that "can only be opened with a specific instrument," the Culture Ministry said.

A museum employee discovered the notebook missing Tuesday morning from the second-floor display case, the police official said anonymously, as police are not authorized to discuss cases publicly. The museum is closed on Tuesdays.

There was no surveillance system in the room where the notebook was displayed, the police official said.

The stolen sketchbook, shiny red with the word "Album" inscribed in gold on the front, dated from 1917 to 1924, the Culture Ministry statement said. It measured 6.3 inches by 9.5 inches (16 by 24 centimeters).

The Picasso Museum, in Paris' old Marais neighborhood, is dedicated to the Spanish-born painter, a founder of the Cubist movement and leading 20th-century artist.

In August 2007, French investigators recovered two Picasso paintings and a drawing worth a total of more than $66 million stolen from the home of the artist's granddaughter in an overnight heist six months earlier. Two of three suspects later arrested were carrying the rolled-up canvases as police closed in. Police had been tipped off by an art dealer after the theft at the luxury Paris apartment of Diana Widmaier-Picasso and suspected the thieves were looking to sell their loot.

One of the paintings, "Maya and the Doll," shows Widmaier-Picasso's mother as a young girl in pigtails. The other recovered painting, "Portrait of Jacqueline," depicts Picasso's second wife, Jacqueline Roque.

In 1994, seven Picasso paintings worth an estimated $44 million were stolen from a Zurich gallery. They were recovered in 2000, and a Swiss man and two Italians were jailed for the theft. The stolen paintings included Picasso's "Seated Woman," and "Christ of Montmartre," which had been stolen from the gallery once before, in 1991

The market for stolen art is valued in the billions of dollars annually.

Death and Funeral Announcement

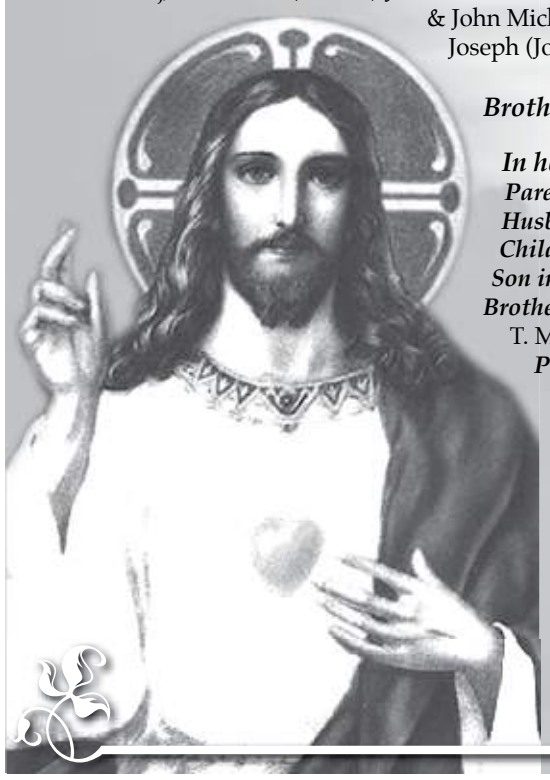
LUISA MUNA CAMACHO

October 10, 1916 – June 04, 2009

was called by her Creator on Thursday, June 04, 2009 at the age of 92.

Her memories will live in the hearts of her:

Children/Spouses and their families: **Ana & Lawrence Larson†** (Larrisa (Mark & Alyssa), Eric & Claudia (Lawrence David); **Rosa & John Sorensen** (Julie & Todd Sandvold (Noah & Adam), Lisa & Matt Breen (Sean & Megan), Alberta Carpenter, Joshua & Genia Carpenter; **Gregorio & Adelina P. Camacho** (Lillian & Keith (Alexandria & Alaina), Jesse & Mylyn (Tricia), Peter Manuel (Peter Manuel Jr., Kiana Mae & Katherine Vicky), Shirley & Paul (Paul Nicolas, Kovin, Gregorio, Daniel Eireng & Nathan), Gregory & Bertha (Amanda Marie, Keala Mikala, Gregory Kachuma, Tia Adelina & Zane), Vidal Joseph & Victoria (Vidal Joseph Jr. & Vayden), Manuel & Mary (Mika Justine); **Maria & Leighton Kahele** (Leilani & Lawrence (Larena, Quinry & Kiani), Leah & Sanj, Mokihana (Makoa) **Jose Muna Camacho, Vidal Muna Camacho†, Celina Camacho Concepcion†** (Melissa & John Michael (Myisha, Nicole Celine, John Edward & John Michael), Tricia & Joseph (Joseph Jr., Kimo & Celina Joe), Rosemarie & Sisong)



Brother: Nicolas Quidachai Muna & Margarita Camacho Muna

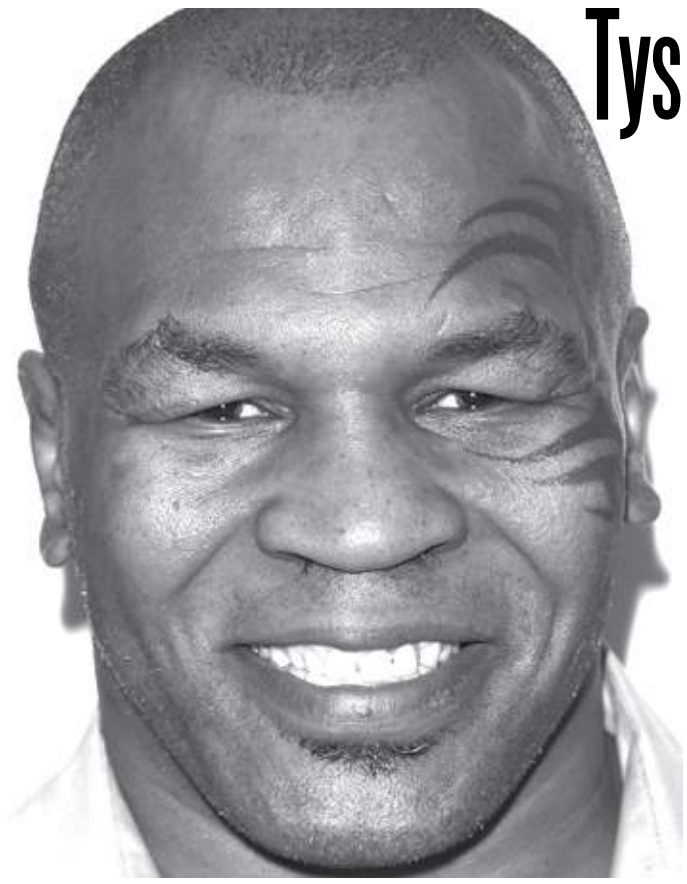
In her new life, she now joins her:
Parents: Jose Duenas Muna & Ana Quidachai Muna
Husband: Pedro Roberto Camacho
Children: Vidal Muna Camacho & Celina Camacho Concepcion
Son in-law: Lawrence Larson
Brothers/Sisters: Joaquin & Magdalena A. Muna, Ana & Joaquin Cabrera, Vicente & Soledad C. Muna, Josepha & Jose Leon Guerrero, Jose & Cresencia T. Muna, Cornelia Q. Muna, Juan & Dolores Muna, Victoria & Antonio M. Benavente
Parents in- law: Jose Palacios Camacho & Rosa Roberto Camacho
Brothers/Sisters in-law: Carmen Roberto Camacho, Gregorio Roberto Camacho, Remedio & Efrain Matsunaga, Dolores & Jesus Unpingco, Andrea Roberto Camacho

Daily Mass is being offered at Mt. Carmel Cathedral at 6:00 am. Nightly Rosary is being held at Mt. Carmel Cathedral at 7:00 pm.

Tomorrow, Friday, June 12, 2009, viewing and last respects may be paid at Nuestra Senora Dela Paz Memorial Chapel beginning at 7:30 am. At 9:30 am, her remains will be escorted from Nuestra Senora Dela Paz Memorial Chapel to Mt. Carmel Cathedral.
Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:00 am. Interment follows at Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYERS.
Children & Family

Tyson marries in Vegas 2 weeks after child's death



In this photo taken on April 20, 2009, former heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson attends a special screening of Sony Picture Classics' 'Tyson' in New York.
AP

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Boxer Mike Tyson has married for a third time, two weeks after his 4-year-old daughter died in a tragic treadmill accident. The owner of the La Bella Wedding Chapel at the Las Vegas Hilton hotel-casino told The Associated Press on Tuesday that the former heavyweight champion and his bride, Lakiha Spicer, exchanged vows Saturday in a short, private ceremony.

Chapel owner Shawn Absher says the couple wed about 10 p.m. after arriving at the hotel from the Clark County marriage bureau in a chapel-owned limousine.

County marriage records in Las Vegas show the 42-year-old Tyson and 32-year-old Spicer got a marriage license about 30 minutes before their ceremony.

Tyson's daughter Exodus died in May. The girl suffocated after she either slipped or put her head in the loop of a cord hanging under a treadmill's console in her Phoenix home. Tyson's agent, Harlan Werner, told the AP that Spicer is not Exodus' mother.

Tyson and Spicer, a resident of suburban Henderson, asked for a simple ceremony with nothing special, Absher said.

"They just wanted to say the vows and be married," he said. "It was very sincere."

Tyson was previously married to actress Robin Givens in 1988 and Monica Turner in 1997.

His first marriage ended after one year after Givens filed for divorce and said in a nationally televised interview that she was afraid of Tyson. His marriage to Turner lasted five years.

Tyson and Spicer seemed very in love, Absher said.

"They were very heartwarming, and I think they really do love each other. "He seemed happy—and his life's been up and down."

Tyson last boxed competitively in 2005.

Blagojevich to mock self in improv comedy show

CHICAGO (AP)—Ousted Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich, a laughingstock since his arrest and impeachment, is getting in on the jokes with Chicago's famed The Second City.

The former governor will participate in Saturday's evening performance of "Rod Blagojevich Superstar," his spokesman Glenn Selig said Tuesday.

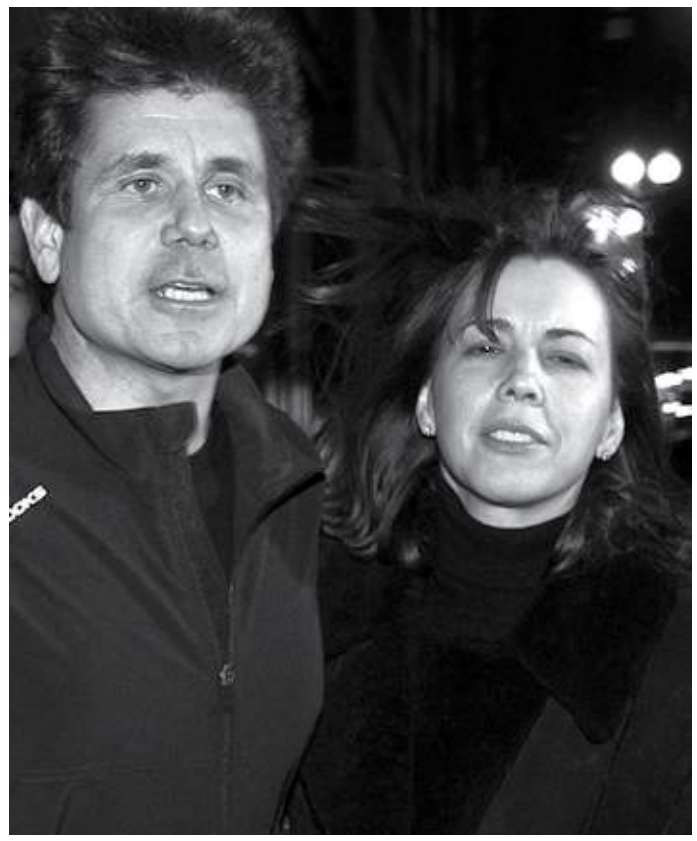
The show is a takeoff on the rock opera "Jesus Christ Superstar" and follows Blagojevich's rise and fall. Its run was supposed to end June 14, but the improvisational comedy group extended performances to Aug. 9 because of its popularity.

Selig declined to say how much Blagojevich will be paid, but said he will make a donation to Gilda's Club, a cancer support organization founded by Gilda Radner, the late "Saturday Night Live" performer and Second City alumna.

"The play is a satire and he plans to watch it along with everyone else and expects to get a good laugh and at the same time help Gilda's Club," Selig said.

A Second City spokeswoman did not immediately return a message from The Associated Press. A woman who answered the telephone at the box office but declined to give her name said Saturday's first performance was sold out, but tickets were available for the later show.

Blagojevich has pleaded not guilty to charges that he schemed to sell or trade President Barack Obama's former U.S. Senate seat and used the muscle of the governor's office to get campaign donations. He was impeached and ousted from office in January.



In this Sunday Dec. 14, 2008 file photo, Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich and his wife Patti leave a downtown office building in Chicago.
AP

Coroner: Danny Gans died accidentally

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Las Vegas entertainer Danny Gans' death was accidental, caused by a prescription painkiller, a coroner said Tuesday.

Clark County Coroner Mike Murphy said an autopsy, toxicology and microscopic samples showed the 52-year-old Gans died from toxic levels of hydromorphone. The opiate drug, commonly marketed under the brand name Dilaudid, is used to treat chronic pain, which Gans suffered from, Murphy said.

Gans

Murphy said Gans had heart disease caused by high blood pressure—which makes the heart work overtime and left him more susceptible to heart irregularities. Gans also had a condition (polycythemia) that results in too many red blood cells, Murphy said. (The condition is the opposite of anemia.)

"Mr. Gans' health conditions placed him at greater risk for heart irregularities, and the hydromorphone was a factor in exacerbating those risks," Murphy said. "We clearly listed this as accidental."

Gans was found dead in bed at home in Henderson early May 1 after his wife, Julie, reported she couldn't rouse him.

Upon Gans' death, his manager Chip Lightman described Gans as someone who watched his diet, loved to perform and relished his involvement in Las Vegas area fundraisers and philanthropic causes.

"I managed him 18 years and health was never an issue," Lightman told The Associated Press at the time. "Danny lived a good, clean Christian life. He was not a drug user. He would have a glass of wine because they say red wine is good for you. He didn't smoke."

On Tuesday, Lightman said: "Everyone knew he had two shoulder surgeries and excruciating back problems."

Lightman attributed Gans' chronic pain to back injuries dating to his years playing minor league baseball and to the rigors of his performances.

A one-time minor league baseball player, Gans was a singer-actor-impressionist who spent more than a decade working his way to top billing at the Encore Theater at Wynn Las Vegas on the Las Vegas Strip.

His show brought impressions in rapid-fire succession—Tony Bennett, Al Pacino, Sarah Vaughan, Clint Eastwood, Rodney Dangerfield, Woody Allen, Bill Cosby, Kermit the Frog, Jimmy Stewart.

A May 21 memorial drew about 1,000 guests at the Encore.

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Imagine That
Friday 4:25 7:20 9:55
Saturday 1:30 4:25 7:20 9:55
Sunday 1:30 4:25 7:20
Mon 4:25 7:20
Tues thru Thurs 1:30 4:25 7:20
Eddie Murphy, Yara Shahidi
Family-Oriented Comedy • Rated PG
Synopsis
Like many busy professionals, Evan Danielson (Eddie Murphy) is so focused on his career that quality time with his young daughter, Olivia (Yara Shahidi), has fallen by the wayside. When an important promotion is suddenly within reach, stressed-out Evan starts to fall apart while trying to fend off his company rival (Thomas Haden Church) . But when little Olivia introduces him to the inhabitants of her imaginary land, Evan rediscovers his inner child and finds the answers to all his problems.

Taking of Pelham 123
Friday 4:20 7:05 9:50
Saturday 1:20 4:20 7:05 9:50
Sunday 1:20 4:20 7:05
Mon 4:20 7:05
Tues thru Thurs 1:20 4:20 7:05
Denzel Washington, John Travolta
Thriller • Rated R
Synopsis
A New York City subway dispatcher draws on his extensive knowledge of the subway system in order to outsmart a dangerous criminal mastermind who's hijacked a subway train in this remake of the 1974 thriller inspired by John Godey's best-selling book. Walter Garber (Denzel Washington) was drifting through his daily routine when he received word that a heavily armed gang of four has hijacked a subway train and are holding all of the passengers hostage.

★ ★ ★

Land of the Lost
Friday 4:00 7:00 9:45
Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:45
Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:00
Mon 4:00 7:00
Tues thru Thurs 1:00 4:00 7:00
Will Farrell, Anna Friel
Adventure, Family, Fantasy • Rated PG 13
Synopsis
Has-been scientist Dr. Rick Marshall, is a man with no weapons, few skills and questionable smarts who must survive an alternate universe full of marauding dinosaurs and fantastic creatures from beyond our world. Marshall has been sucked through a space-time vortex to a place of spectacular sights known as the Land of the Lost. Coming along with him for the adventure are crack-smart research assistant Holly and a redneck souvenirist named Will.

The Hangover
Friday 4:30 7:25 9:30
Saturday 1:25 4:30 7:25 9:30
Sunday 1:25 4:30 7:25
Mon 4:30 7:25
Tues thru Thurs 1:25 4:30 7:25
Bradley Cooper, Ed Helms
Comedy • Rated R

Terminator Salvation
Friday 4:15 7:30 10:00
Saturday 1:10 4:15 7:30 10:00
Sunday 1:10 4:15 7:30
Mon 4:15 7:30
Tues thru Thurs 1:10 4:15 7:30
Christian Bale, Sam Worthington
Action, Sci-Fi • Rated PG 13

Up
Friday 4:05 7:10 9:35
Saturday 1:05 4:05 7:10 9:35
Sunday 1:05 4:05 7:10
Mon 4:05 7:10
Tues thru Thurs 1:05 4:05 7:10
Ed Asner, Jordan Nagai
Comedy, Adventure, Family • Rated PG

Night at the Museum 2
Friday 4:10 7:15 9:40
Saturday 1:15 4:10 7:15 9:40
Sunday 1:15 4:10 7:15
Mon 4:10 7:15
Tues thru Thurs 1:15 4:10 7:15
Den Stiller, Amy Adams
Comedy, Sequel • Rated PG

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Suriname acquits singer in Toni Braxton case

PARAMARIBO, Suriname (AP)—A Toni Braxton impersonator was acquitted Tuesday of trying to fool paying customers into thinking she's the real thing.

Judge Robby Rodrigues said it wasn't clear whether Trina Johnson-Finn knew that concert-goers had been led to believe she was really Toni Braxton. The Las Vegas entertainer had spent three months in jail awaiting a verdict.

A crowd of 3,000 people pelted Johnson-Finn with beer cans and booed her offstage in February when they realized she was not the six-time Grammy winner best known for the hit, "Un-break My Heart." Some had paid as much as $53 per ticket.

"We'd like to once again express our apologies to the people of Suriname who lost their ... earnings at the hands of those who deceived them as well as us," husband Raymond Finn said in a statement.

"I'm delighted with the judge's decision," Johnson-Finn told reporters outside the courtroom. "It was hard dealing with the situation knowing I was innocent. But now I just want to go back home and hug my family, my husband. I haven't seen them for so long."

Prosecutors had requested she serve a one-year sentence with nine months of it suspended.

Defense attorney Kathleen Brandon said that part of the problem is that Surinamese are not familiar with the business of celebrity impersonating.

Concert promoter Angel Ventura and his girlfriend, Signet Sampson, are expected to stand trial in July. Ventura initially said that Johnson-Finn knew about the scam from the beginning, according to police, but he later retracted that allegation.

Queen Latifah to host BET Awards after-party show

NEW YORK (AP)—The party won't stop after the BET Awards are over, and Queen Latifah (Lah-TEE'-fah) will be around to make sure of it.

The entertainer is hosting the network's post-awards televised bash, which will air after the live show June 28.

Beyonce (bee-AHN'-say) and T.I. are the top nominees for the BET Awards with five each. The show will be hosted by another nominee—Jamie Foxx

Beyonce and Foxx are also set to perform along with acts like Maxwell and Ne-Yo (NEE-yo).

AP

In this Feb. 22, 2009 file photo, Queen Latifah arrives for the 81st Academy Awards in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

Rocker Henry Summer gets judge's OK for drug rehab

AP

In this May 5, 2009 file photo provided by Indianapolis police, musician Henry Lee Summer, whose real name is Henry Lee Swartz, is shown after his arrest in Indianapolis.

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Late-1980s pop artist Henry Lee Summer has a court's permission to enter drug rehabilitation in Nashville, Tenn., while he awaits a trial in Indianapolis on methamphetamine possession and other charges.

Defense attorney Angela Davis says Judge Jose Salinas on Tuesday granted Summer's request to check into a treatment center for at least 28 days.

Summer, whose real name is Henry Swartz, is due back in court Sept. 8.

Summer was arrested May 6 after police say he threw drugs from his car during a traffic stop. Officers say they needed pepper spray to subdue him.

The 53-year-old singer scored two Top 20 hits in the late 1980s with "I Wish I Had a Girl (Who Walked Like That)" and his cover of "Hey Baby."

'Sims 3' sells 1.4 million in first week

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"The Sims" are in a good mood.

Electronic Arts Inc., publisher of the popular video game franchise, announced Tuesday that 1.4 million copies of "The Sims 3" were sold the first week. That makes "Sims 3" the best-selling PC game launch in EA's history.

The company also said over 7 million user-designed items—such as home furnishings and clothing—were downloaded from the game's Web site.

The third installment of the life-simulating game was released June 2 and features a new moviemaking tool and additional ways to customize the personalities of the game's virtual townsfolk. EA announced last year that the original "Sims" passed the 100 million sales mark since its launch in 2000, making "The Sims" the world's best-selling computer game.

AP

In this video game image released by Electronic Arts, a scene from "The Sims 3," where various personality traits can be selected for a character, is shown.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Marva Wright hospitalized after stroke

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—New Orleans blues singer Marva Wright has been hospitalized after a stroke. Relatives say the 61-year-old Wright had just finished her regular gig at the CoCo Club on Bourbon Street early Saturday when paramedics were called because the singer wasn't feeling well and had slurred speech. Wright's daughter, Gerry McKey, said Tuesday her mother remains in a local hospital with limited movement on her right side. McKey said her mother has diabetes and high blood pressure and suffered a less severe stroke about three weeks ago. Manager Adam Shipley said Wright's June 19 show at Tipitina's has been canceled and other cancellations may follow. Wright's band, the BMWs, performed as scheduled at a benefit concert Sunday with a substitute singer.

Natalie Cole announces first post-surgery concert

NEW YORK (AP)—Natalie Cole is preparing for her comeback performance less than a month after a successful kidney transplant. The Grammy-winning singer says she'll perform Sept. 9 at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles. The 59-year-old had the surgery in Los Angeles last month. She had been scheduled to start a tour on June 5; those dates are being rescheduled. Cole is also thanking fans for their support. Her sister Carole Cole died on May 19, the same day the singer had her surgery. Cole says she's in the midst of sorrow, but is still able to celebrate her "new lease on life."

Actors ratify 2-year Hollywood movie, TV contract

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Members of the Screen Actors Guild have voted to ratify a two-year contract covering movies and prime-time TV shows made by the major Hollywood studios. The vote, with 78 percent in favor of the deal, follows a bitter dispute that saw Guild members fighting among themselves and left them further behind than where they started. The contract immediately raises the minimum pay for union members. But it does not improve compensation for Internet content beyond what other unions have already accepted. The deal comes just less than a year after the last contract expired, meaning actors have lost out on raises over the past year—which the studios estimated totaled nearly $80 million.

Woman hides her body and feelings from her husband

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I am 43, the mother of four children and just celebrated my 20th anniversary. Is it normal for someone to be married all this time and still not want your husband to see you naked?

I do not reveal myself to him. The lights must always be off, and I keep a shirt on. It's not because I am ashamed of my body; it's that I'm not attracted to him. I never was.

I married my husband for security and have learned to love him. But I love him like a brother, in a sisterly kind of way. I feel I owe him.

Should I tell my husband how I feel and risk losing my security after all this time? I had to talk to someone, so I confided in my best friend. She advised me to say nothing.

My husband had an affair a few years ago, and frankly, I was secretly relieved. Sometimes I wish he was still with her. Now that it's over, I'm back in hiding. Abby, please advise.

HIDING IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR HIDING: What a sad situation. By marrying your husband feeling as you did, you have cheated both of you. Not only have you "not revealed" yourself physically, you have not revealed yourself emotionally or in any other way. You wish he was still with his lover because it took the pressure off you.

Your husband had an affair because instinctively he knew something important was missing in your marriage, and if you were happy you would not have written to me. What you have described is not a marriage; it is an "arrangement."

My advice is to talk to your husband about making another kind of arrangement—one in which he supports the children and possibly makes some kind of settlement with you, while you both pursue your separate lives. Frankly, it won't be much different than what you are already experiencing.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend, "Will," recently let it slip that he thinks I'm less intelligent than he is. He said if we were to take an IQ test, he would score higher. I felt hurt and angry when he said it, especially because he truly believes it. He said the same thing to me five years ago.

Now I find myself feeling extremely defensive. I am in the top third of my law school class but did poorly in engineering school. In contrast, Will has a Ph.D. in engineering.

Will assures me that being less intelligent doesn't diminish me, but I'm still upset. Now I'm thinking of ending the relationship. Do you think I'm being overly sensitive?

AVERAGE IN MARYLAND

DEAR MARYLAND: Please allow me to enlighten you about something. Being in the top third of your class in law school already makes you above average, so please stop allowing your boyfriend's egotistical comment to undermine your self-esteem.

Will may or may not have a higher IQ than you, but he is lacking in social intelligence and common sense. His superior attitude is obnoxious. Whether you keep him or dump him is up to you, but recognize that no one has everything. While Will may be brilliant in one area, he is deficient when it comes to sensitivity. Ask yourself why he needed to say what he did to you, and you may find that he's using his air of intellectual superiority to mask a lack of self-esteem.

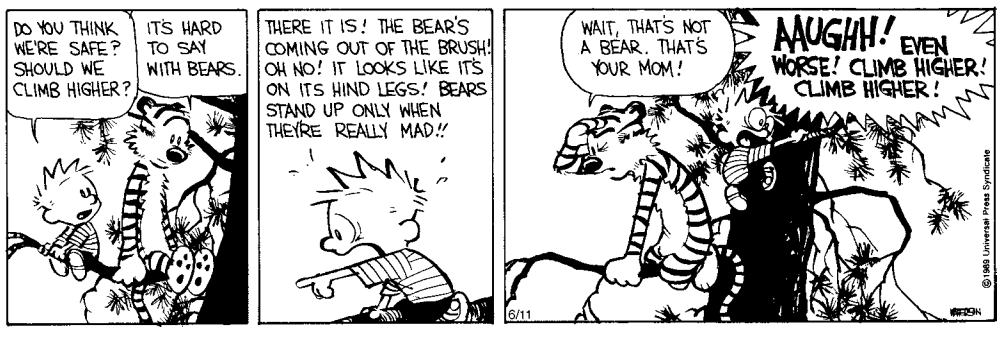
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


DO YOU THINK WE'RE SAFE? SHOULD WE CLIMB HIGHER?
IT'S HARD TO SAY WITH BEARS.
THERE IT IS! THE BEAR'S COMING OUT OF THE BRUSH! OH NO! IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S ON ITS HIND LEGS! BEARS STAND UP ONLY WHEN THEY'RE REALLY MAD!!
WAIT, THAT'S NOT A BEAR. THAT'S YOUR MOM!
AAUGHH! EVEN WORSE! CLIMB HIGHER! CLIMB HIGHER!
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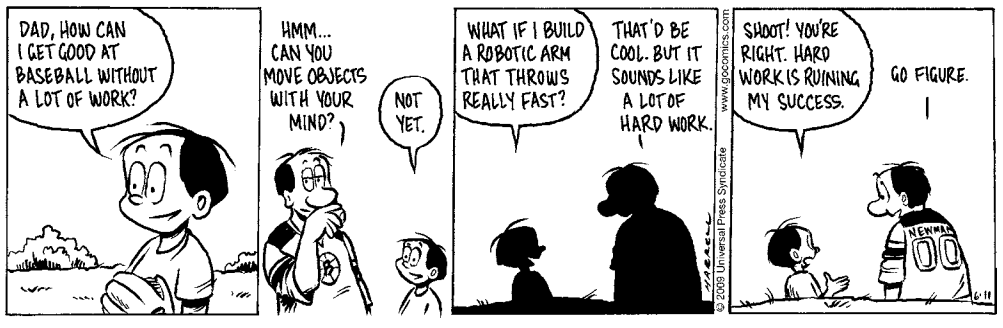
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


DAD, HOW CAN I GET GOOD AT BASEBALL WITHOUT A LOT OF WORK?
HMM... CAN YOU MOVE OBJECTS WITH YOUR MIND?
NOT YET.
WHAT IF I BUILD A ROBOTIC ARM THAT THROWS REALLY FAST?
THAT'D BE COOL. BUT IT SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF HARD WORK.
SHOOT! YOU'RE RIGHT. HARD WORK IS RUINING MY SUCCESS.
GO FIGURE.
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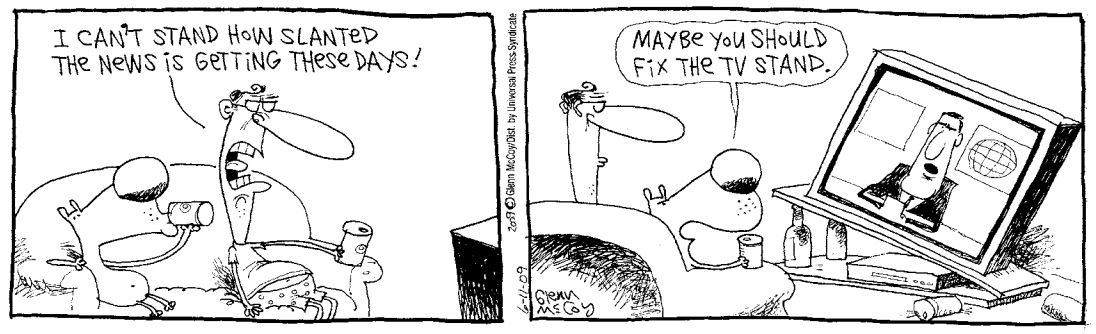
6/11

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


I CAN'T STAND HOW SLANTED THE NEWS IS GETTING THESE DAYS!
MAYBE YOU SHOULD FIX THE TV STAND.
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6-11-09
GLENN McCOY

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Suitable
4 Agenda entry
8 Inquisitive
12 Scratch
13 Evoking an "eeww!"
14 Killer whale
15 Offstage aide
17 "Hud" Oscar winner
18 Swab the deck
19 Charmingly innocent
21 Be unsteady
24 Nosh
25 Fuss
26 Early bird?
28 Ball-rolling game
32 Type-face choice
34 Chic no more
36 Entreat
37 Hallow-een option
39 Possibly will
41 Galena, e.g.
42 Shell-game need
44 Stuck
46 Tea with fabled powers
50 Take blades to blades
51 Mine entrance
52 Openings for aglets
56 Region
57 Unrivaled
58 Author Buscaglia
59 Winged
60 Basin access-sory
61 Put down

DOWN
1 Music booster
2 Standard
3 Brass member
4 Drink
5 Perfor-mance
6 Distort
7 Short liturgical prayer
8 Direct, as a flight
9 Hydrox rival
10 Con job
11 Elis' campus
16 Unruly bunch
20 Appre-hend
21 Float gracefully
22 Smell
23 Freudian concept
27 Wrigley product
29 Ironsides com-mander
30 Concern
31 Kept tabs on
33 Mixologist
35 — Mahal
38 Ball-bearing item
40 Talk on and on
43 Viewpoint
45 Oft-tattooed word
46 Mid-eastern Strip
47 "Ameri-can —"
48 Ship of 1492
49 Expand
53 "A Chorus Line" song
54 Earl Grey, for one
55 Sauce source

Solution time: 25 mins.

E	B	B	■	S	E	A	S	■	B	E	T	A
G	O	O	■	U	L	N	A	■	A	M	E	N
A	R	M	■	I	L	O	V	E	L	U	C	Y
D	E	B	U	T	■	■	E	E	L	■	■	■
■	■	■	M	O	H	S	■	K	A	Z	O	O
I	A	M	A	R	O	C	K	■	D	A	N	A
O	V	A	■	S	P	O	O	K	■	N	T	H
T	I	M	S	■	I	W	A	N	T	Y	O	U
A	V	A	I	L	■	S	N	E	E	■	■	■
■	■	■	T	E	E	■	■	S	A	L	L	Y
I	G	E	T	I	D	E	A	S	■	Y	E	A
R	A	R	E	■	G	A	P	E	■	R	A	M
A	G	A	R	■	Y	U	R	T	■	E	N	S

Yesterday's answer 6-11

1	2	3	■	4	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12			■	13				■	14			
15			16					■	17			
■	■	18			■	19		20				
21	22				23	■	24			■	■	■
25			■	26		27	■	28		29	30	31
32			33	■	34		35	■	36			
37				38	■	39		40	■	41		
■	■	■	42		43	■	44		45			
46	47	48				49	■	50			■	■
51				■	52		53				54	55
56				■	57				■	58		
59				■	60				■	61		

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Shia LaBeouf, 23; Joshua Jackson, 31; Adrienne Barbeau, 64; Gene Wilder, 76

Happy Birthday: Be practical and look at your options carefully this year. You can put together a strategy that will bring success. Not everyone will be on your side, so don't be afraid to do things on your own. Keep your expenses down. Take pride in what you do, scale down and you will be successful. Your numbers are 4, 7, 17, 20, 34, 36, 40

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Think forward and avoid living in the past. You have to be progressive and fresh if you want everyone to think of you as a candidate for something interesting and entertaining. You will get what you desire. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Lessen your stress by freeing up time and making plans to enjoy the company of like-minded people. If you consider your past, present and future and what or whom you want in your life, you will have the ability to advance. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You can learn a lot from people who practice different philosophies, cultures or traditions. Change is what makes you tick and helps you avoid boredom. Don't fall short of your goals because of someone's demands. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You will have to be tight with your contributions or donations. Put your cash into something that will maintain your current assets or add to them. Don't be fooled by someone's offer of happiness—create your own emotional well-being. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Give and take will be necessary if you want to reach your goals. You'll need to prove you are capable of handling whatever situation comes your way. Someone will try to sabotage your plans. Be direct but avoid losing your temper if you want to come out on top. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Look at the big picture before you make up your mind what to do next. Taking time off or spending it with someone you respect will lead to a good decision. Don't let your emotions or a love interest lead to poor judgment. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): You are in the driver's seat and must take control. There are deals on the table and choices that can make or break you. Don't give in to pleading or pressure. You have to call the shots yourself. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Don't take chances if you don't have to. You've managed to do things on your own so far and you should make the choice to finish what you began alone. Keep your life simple, precise and within your means. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Apply some very simple rules to something you want to get involved in. Ask someone you have an emotional attachment to if you are doing the right thing. You can trust the person who knows your background and ability best. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Stick close to home and the people you care about most. You can gain substantial ground by talking matters over with children, your lover, relatives or close friends. There is an investment you should be looking at. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Piling too much responsibility on your shoulders or trying to fit too much into your day will lead to upset and potential failure. You have to trust your own judgment, not what someone else tells you is possible. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Get to work on something that has possibilities and practicality written all over it. Stick to the norm even if the unknown is more inviting. Don't put your cash into something that is likely to fail. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are emotional, compassionate and incredibly inventive. You can be stubborn but also very willing to do whatever it takes to reach your goals.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		9		2			4	
6								
		7	5		6	1		2
		1				8		
9				5				3
		6				9		
2		8	1		9	5		
								6
	1			7		4		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 6/11

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

8	4	5	2	9	1	7	3	6
7	2	1	3	6	5	9	8	4
6	9	3	4	8	7	1	5	2
2	3	9	5	1	6	8	4	7
5	7	4	8	3	9	2	6	1
1	6	8	7	4	2	5	9	3
9	8	6	1	2	3	4	7	5
4	1	7	6	5	8	3	2	9
3	5	2	9	7	4	6	1	8

Difficulty Level ★★★ 6/10

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

ELECTION DAY **Solution: 9 letters**

L	L	A	I	C	E	P	S	A	E	S	R	E	V	O
E	V	I	T	A	T	N	E	S	E	R	P	E	R	U
G	N	T	E	L	E	V	I	S	I	O	N	D	F	T
I	O	E	P	T	Y	C	A	R	C	O	M	E	D	C
S	I	V	U	T	A	S	K	S	I	E	D	T	L	O
L	T	R	E	S	E	T	E	S	Z	E	I	A	E	M
A	C	B	A	R	S	R	S	I	R	A	R	R	T	E
T	I	R	R	S	N	I	R	A	W	E	E	U	A	L
I	D	O	L	I	M	O	L	I	N	E	R	G	N	E
O	S	A	Y	M	H	O	R	E	T	N	(V)	U	E	C
N	I	D	O	T	C	O	G	N	O	(O)	D	A	S	T
E	R	C	U	A	L	N	E	U	(T)	E	R	N	N	O
P	U	A	L	E	E	S	T	(E)	C	I	V	I	C	R
O	J	S	T	W	B	T	S	I	V	I	T	C	A	A
Y	A	T	S	A	N	I	N	R	O	W	S	W	A	L

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Absentee, Activist, Authorize, Broadcast, Civic, Commission, Democracy, Early, Electoral, Federal, General, Governor, Inaugurated, Issue, Jurisdiction, Laws, Legislation, Local, News, Open, Outcome, Overseas, Representative, Role, Senate, Special, State, Stay, Sworn In, Tasks, Television, Territorial, Turnout, Vote, Wait

Yesterday's Answer: Chinatown

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

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- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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Classified Ads

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Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Magic shoot 63 percent in win over Lakers

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Missing for two games, Orlando found its Magic touch.

Making easy shots and tough ones from everywhere, the Magic won their first game in two visits to the NBA finals as Dwight Howard and Rashard Lewis scored 21 points apiece in a 108-104 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers in Game 3 on Tuesday night to pull within 2-1.

Orlando shot a finals record 63 percent—including another record 75 percent in the first half—to snap a six-game finals losing streak and avoid falling into an 0-3 hole that 88 previous teams in postseason history have been unable to escape.

"Well, it was going in the basket. That always works," Magic coach Stan Van Gundy said. "That formula's always tried and true."

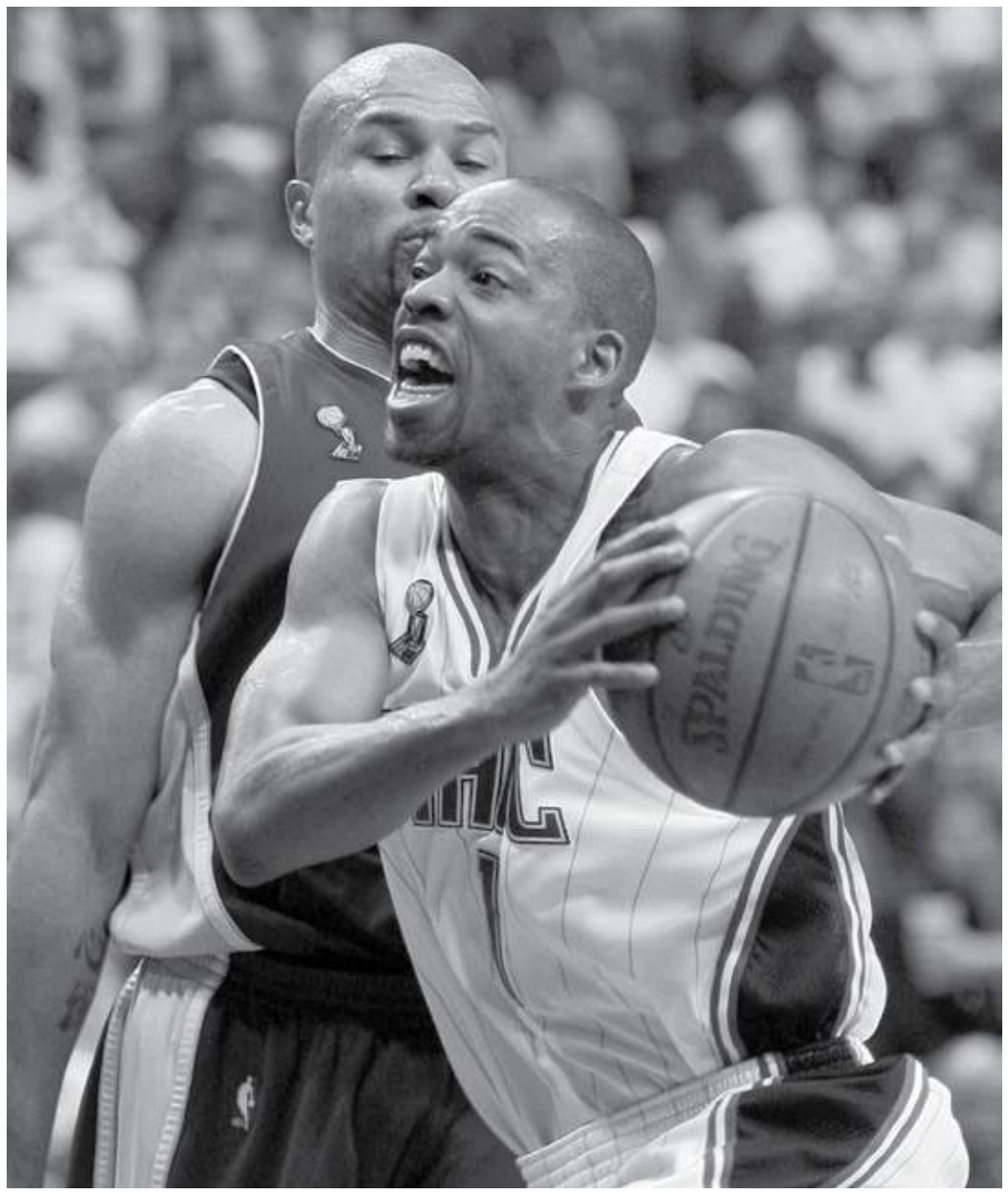
Kobe Bryant, seeking a fourth title and his first since 2002, scored 31 points for the Lakers but the superstar had just 10 points in the second half and went only 4 of 15 from the field after the first quarter. He also missed five free throws, points that could have given the Lakers that 3-0 lead.

Game 4 is Thursday night, and Game 5—now necessary—will be at Amway Arena on Sunday.

The Lakers, going for their 15th title and looking to redeem themselves for losing to Boston last season, have lost their stranglehold.

"This is a tough team, not a cupcake team," Bryant said. "Extremely well coached, execute well and we've got our work cut out."

With their season 48 minutes from all but disappearing, the Magic, hosting their first finals game since 1995, had five players score at least 18 points. Rafer Alston, who was just 3 of 17 from the field in the first two games, had 20 and Hedo Turkoglu and Mickael Pietrus 18 each.



AP

Orlando Magic's Rafer Alston (1) drives past Los Angeles Lakers' Derek Fisher in the second half of Game 3 of the NBA basketball finals Tuesday, June 9, 2009, in Orlando, Fla.

"We've got to play like this," Howard said. "When guys are attacking we're tough to guard."

Pau Gasol scored 23 points but had just three rebounds and the Lakers were only 16 of 26 from the line.

For a while, it appeared the Magic, who shot just 36 percent while dropping Games 1 and 2 at Staples Center, couldn't or wouldn't miss.

From 20 feet, swish. From 10 feet, nothing but net. Layups, runners, banks, pull-ups, didn't matter. You name it, if it went up, more times than not it went in.

Orlando made 24 of 32 shots in the first half and only cooled off a little in the third quarter as they entered the fourth at a 65 percent clip and clinging to an 81-75 lead.

Bryant sat out the first 4:47 of the fourth, and when he finally subbed in, the Lakers were still down by five and unable to do anything to stop the Magic's marksmanship.

But then, Orlando began to misfire at the worst time possible.

After Pietrus was long with a wide-open 3, Gasol was fouled at the other end and made two free throws to make it 99 all with 2:41 remaining. Orlando's rowdy crowd, which waited 14 years for a chance to welcome the Larry O'Brien Trophy to town, grew nervous.

"Oh, boy," muttered one fan near the media section.

But Pietrus calmed fears by dunking in a rare miss to put the Magic up two, and when Lewis hit a jumper—it was originally called a 3 but replays showed his right foot was on the line—Orlando was up 104-101.

Howard was called for a questionable foul on a drive by Bryant, who then split his two free throws. When he went to the Lakers bench during a timeout that followed, Bryant hit himself in the head for letting two more valuable points slip away.

Orlando couldn't capitalize, though, and the Lakers got the ball back when Lewis missed a baseline jumper and the rebound went off him and out of bounds.

Bryant, who scored 17 in the first quarter and 21 by halftime, then maybe tried to do too much. He crossed over to get past Pietrus, but Howard, the league's defensive player of the year known mostly for his blocks underneath, made like a point guard and tipped the ball away. Pietrus was fouled and made both to make it 106-102.

The Lakers suddenly became desperate. Instead of working the ball into Gasol or Lamar Odom, they fired away from outside.

They couldn't shoot with the Magic.

Bryant missed a 3, Trevor Ariza misfired on one, Bryant clanged another and Derek Fisher was long as the Lakers went 0 for 4 on a possession where they had to have points. Bryant did score on a putback with .05 seconds left, but it was too late and although there was still time left, confetti began to fall to the court.

Lakers coach Phil Jackson felt Bryant looked tired down the stretch.

"We're all frail as humans," he said. "Sometimes not as much as others."

Orlando, which was swept by the Houston Rockets 14 years ago, could finally celebrate winning one on pro basketball's biggest stage.

Bryant fouled Lewis with .02 seconds to go, and as Magic fans hugged and danced at an outcome they longed for, he dropped two more to seal it.

The last time Orlando hosted a finals game, Howard was a 9-year-old kid in Atlanta and Shaquille O'Neal was the Magic's Superman.

Outside the cramped arena, which had a red Superman cape hanging off one wall, Orlando fans, one of them dressed as Jack Nicholson and carrying a sign that read: "Jack, You Can't Handle The Truth," gathered on the sidewalks hoping this would be a night their team could get back into the series.

They believed.

This was their magic night.

Tim Floyd resigns as USC basketball coach

LOS ANGELES(AP)—Tim Floyd suddenly resigned as basketball coach at Southern California on Tuesday following allegations that he give $1,000 in cash to a man who helped steer former star player O.J. Mayo to the Trojans.

Floyd submitted a one-paragraph letter to USC athletic director Mike Garrett saying he was quitting after four seasons because he no longer had full enthusiasm for his job.

"I accept Tim's decision and wish him well," Garrett said in a statement.

The Clarion-Ledger of Jackson, Miss., first reported Floyd's resignation. He is from Hattiesburg.

The announcement follows allegations that thousands of dollars in cash and gifts were funneled to Mayo by a representative of a sports agency.

Last month, YahooSports.com reported that Louis Johnson, a former associate of Mayo's, told federal and NCAA investigators that Floyd paid to have Mayo sign with the Trojans.

"The university is cooperating fully in the continuing investigation with the NCAA and Pac-10 into all allegations of NCAA and Pac-10 rules violations at USC," Todd Dickey, senior vice president of administration, said in the statement. "The university, the NCAA and Pac-10 have jointly conducted interviews of approximately 50 witnesses. No conclusions have yet been reached. At this point, it would be both inappropriate and premature to comment further."

Floyd has never addressed the allegations involving Mayo. USC has said it can't comment on an ongoing NCAA investigation.

In mid-May, Arizona athletic director Jim Livengood said he had asked Floyd about the reports surrounding his relationship with Mayo.

"I asked him the question," Livengood said. "He said there's nothing to that. So end of question. We didn't go any farther. We didn't need to go any farther."

If the NCAA can prove Floyd paid to have Mayo delivered to USC, that would be considered a major violation. The Trojans could be forced to forfeit victories, and they could face recruiting restrictions and lose scholarships.

USC's powerhouse football team also is under NCAA investigation because of allegations that Heisman Trophy-winning running back Reggie Bush accepted gifts and his family free rent from would-be marketers who wanted him as a client.

Floyd's resignation is another blow to a basketball program that has had starters DeMar DeRozan, Taj Gibson and Daniel Hackett declare for the upcoming NBA draft and has lost three recruits since the season ended.

Garrett said a search to hire a new coach would begin immediately.

"As of 1 p.m. today, I am resigning as head basketball coach at the University of Southern California. I deeply appreciate the opportunity afforded me by the university, as well as the chance to know and work with some of the finest young men in college athletics," Floyd wrote in his letter to Garrett.

"Unfortunately, I no longer feel I can offer the level of enthusiasm to my duties that is deserved by the university, my coaching staff, my players, their families, and the supporters of Southern Cal. I always promised my self and my family that if I ever felt I could no longer give my full enthusiasm to a job, that I should leave it to others who could. I intend to contact my coaching staff and my players in coming days and weeks to tell them how much each of them means to me. I wish the best to USC and to my successor."

In April, Floyd spurned an offer from Arizona to fill its coaching vacancy, saying he was staying at USC. A year ago, Floyd was offered the coaching job at his alma mater Louisiana State and turned it down, saying at the time, "This is my last job at SC."

The day he met reporters to say he had rejected Arizona, Floyd said, "This is still my last job."

That day Garrett called Floyd a "tremendous asset" to USC's basketball program at a school where the nationally ranked football team dominates.

"The future is very bright here under Tim's direction," Garrett said then. "We talked today, and we expressed our commitment to each other. We are both excited about our prospects for next season, especially if we have the team we think we'll have."

On May 27, Floyd appeared with football coach Pete Carroll at a meet-and-greet for USC supporters in Irvine.

Both coaches were asked whether the school was ever going to escape the cloud of the NCAA, the Los Angeles Times reported. Floyd didn't answer.

Carroll said when he first got to USC his goal was to build a program where "everyone was coming after us. Be careful what you wish for," he said, according to the newspaper.

Floyd attended scheduled meet-and-greets May 29 and June 1, but was absent from ones on June 4 and Monday night in San Diego, the school said.

The 55-year-old coach led the Trojans to the NCAA tournament three consecutive seasons, a first in the program's history, and this year he coached them to the Pac-10 tournament title. The Trojans lost to Michigan State in the second round of this year's NCAA tournament. Overall, he was 85-50 in four seasons.

Floyd had three years remaining on his contract.

Floyd's other college stints were at Iowa State, New Orleans and Idaho. His combined record in 16 years at the college level was 328-180. He coached the NBA's Chicago Bulls from 1999-2002 and the New Orleans Hornets from 2003-04.

Red Sox still undefeated vs Yankees this year

BOSTON (AP)—The Boston Red Sox extended their season-opening winning streak over the New York Yankees to its longest in almost a century with a 7-0 win in the American League on Tuesday.

The Red Sox improved to 6-0 against the Yankees franchise for the first time since 1912, when they beat the Highlanders in 14 straight—including the first-ever game in Fenway Park.

Josh Beckett (7-2) struck out eight and walked two before leaving with a 6-0 lead after six innings, having thrown 93 pitches. The only hit he allowed was Robinson Cano's fourth-inning grounder to the left of second baseman Dustin Pedroia.

A.J. Burnett (4-3) allowed three earned runs on five walks and five hits before leaving with two outs in the third and taking out his frustrations on a dugout watercooler.

AP

Boston Red Sox's David Ortiz, center, high-fives starting pitcher Josh Beckett, left, as manager Terry Francona, right, celebrates with players after Boston's 7-0 victory over the New York Yankees in a baseball game at Fenway Park in Boston on Tuesday, June 9, 2009.

Indians 8, Royals 4

At Cleveland, Mark DeRosa's grand slam off reliever Jamey Wright in the seventh inning lifted Cleveland out of last place in the Central Division.

The Indians loaded the bases off Juan Cruz (3-2) in the seventh with a fielder's choice, walk and a hit batsman. Cruz, who began the year as Kansas City's top setup man, has allowed eight earned runs over his last three innings, spanning four appearances. Wright relieved Cruz, and DeRosa hit his second pitch into the seats in right field.

Orioles 3, Mariners 1

At Baltimore, rookie Brad Bergesen pitched eight innings of five-hit ball and Nolan Reimold homered and had two RBIs as Baltimore ended a five-game losing streak.

Bergesen (3-2) set career marks for fewest runs allowed and most strikeouts (six).

Jason Vargas (2-1) allowed three runs and seven hits in 5 2-3 innings.

Angels 4, Rays 3

At St. Petersburg, Florida, Jered Weaver allowed two runs over six innings to win his third consecutive start for Los Angeles.

Weaver (6-2) gave up five hits, four walks and struck out six.

Vladimir Guerrero had an RBI single during a two-run first.

Ben Zobrist hit solo homer and finished with two RBIs for the Rays, who have lost three in a row. James Shields (5-5) allowed four runs and 10 hits in 6 1-3 innings.

Blue Jays 9, Rangers 0

At Arlington, Texas, Brian Tallet and two relievers combined for a two-hitter, and Adam Lind homered as Toronto beat Texas.

Tallet (4-3) went seven innings to match the longest start of his career. The lefty walked two, struck out three and retired the last eight batters he faced to win for the second time in three starts. Dirk Hayhurst and B.J. Ryan each pitched a scoreless inning of relief.

Tigers 7, White Sox 6, 10 Innings

At Chicago, Miguel Cabrera broke out of a slump with a solo homer in the 10th inning to lift Detroit over Chicago after squandering a three-run lead in the ninth inning.

Cabrera, who had been hitless in his last 12 at-bats, led off the 10th with a shot to left-center off White Sox reliever Scott Linebrink (2-4). It was Cabrera's 11th homer of the season.

Twins 10, Athletics 5

At Oakland, California, Jason Kubel and Justin Morneau each hit a home run and Scott Baker took a shutout into the ninth inning as Minnesota beat Oakland to end a three-game losing streak.

Delmon Young drove in three runs for the Twins, who scored more runs than in their previous four games combined. Chris Gomez added two RBIs and Brendan Harris had three hits.

Mets 6, Phils 5

At New York, on a rare off-night for Johan Santana, the New York Mets bailed their ace out with their bats to beat the division rival Philadelphia Phillies.

David Wright, Carlos Beltran and Ryan Church homered—with Church sending a drive over the 16-foot (five-meter) wall and into the well where the Home Run Apple sits in straightaway center field.

Santana (8-3) tied his career high by allowing four home runs for only the second time in 221 major league starts, allowing drives to Ryan Howard, Raul Ibanez, Jimmy Rollins and Chase Utley.

Braves 4, Pirates 3

At Atlanta, Derek Lowe pitched seven solid innings and Yunel Escobar hit a two-run single in the seventh to carry Atlanta to a third straight win, matching its season high.

Lowe (7-3) allowed seven hits and walked one. Sean Burnett (1-2) took the loss after starter Ross Ohlendorf pitched into the seventh.

Marlins 4, Cardinals 3

At Miami, Jeremy Hermida homered leading off the ninth inning, lifting Florida over St. Louis.

Hermida hit a 1-1 pitch from reliever Jason Motte (2-2) into the right-field seats for his first career game-winning homer. It came after Matt Lindstrom (2-1) pitched a scoreless ninth for the Marlins, who rallied from an early three-run hole.

Rockies 3, Brewers 2

At Milwaukee, Carlos Gonzalez hit a pair of doubles as Colorado rallied for three runs in the seventh inning to continue its recent road resurgence with a win over Milwaukee.

The Rockies, who have won six straight on the road under recently named manager Jim Tracy—including their four-game sweep of the Cardinals.

Cubs 7, Astros 1

At Houston, Ted Lilly pitched 6 2-3 shutout innings as Chicago beat Houston.

Lilly (7-4) allowed only three hits to beat the Astros for the sixth straight time and improve to 3-0 against them this season.

Mike Fontenot hit a solo homer and Andres Blanco added a two-run double for the Cubs, who improved to 5-1 at Minute Maid Park this season.

Nationals select Strasburg with top pick in draft

SECAUCUS, N.J. (AP)—Drafting pitcher Stephen Strasburg was the easy part for the Washington Nationals. Signing him could be much more difficult.

Strasburg was selected by the woeful Nationals with the first pick in baseball's amateur draft Tuesday night, a move that was long expected.

Considered one of the most talented prospects in the event's 45-year history, the right-hander features a blazing fastball that's been clocked at 102 mph—and some nasty breaking stuff, too. He went 13-1 with a 1.32 ERA this season for San Diego State, leading the Aztecs to their first postseason berth since 1991.

"He's a tremendous pitching package," Nationals acting general manager Mike Rizzo said. "We weren't going to pass on the best player in the draft."

But signing him might be a major challenge, because agent Scott Boras is sure to seek a record contract that easily exceeds the $10.5 million Mark Prior received after he was drafted in 2001.

Teams have until Aug. 15 to sign draft choices, otherwise they lose their rights.

Strasburg leads Division I pitchers with 195 strikeouts in 109 innings this year, and was the only amateur on the U.S. Olympic team that won a bronze medal in Beijing last summer. He struck out 23 in a game against Utah last season and threw a no-hitter with 17 Ks against Air Force this year.

Strasburg went undrafted out of high school, but some think he has the ability to go straight from college to the big leagues.

"It's tough to say right now," Strasburg said in a phone interview on MLB Network. "We'll see what happens."

One person who thinks it's realistic is Strasburg's coach at San Diego State, Hall of Famer Tony Gwynn.

"I think he's a lot closer than people think," Gwynn said. "He's got the kind of stuff, the kind of baseball savvy, he could be successful."

Rizzo, however, sounded content to let Strasburg develop at a steady pace.

"There's no shortcut process in this. It's a process that we can't rush," Rizzo said. "As far as I'm concerned, there's no pitcher or player that's major league ready coming out of the draft. They've never experienced the wear and tear of a professional season."

With the second pick, the Seattle Mariners chose North Carolina slugger Dustin Ackley, who has batted at least .400 for three consecutive seasons.

Also represented by Boras, Ackley has 22 home runs and 70 RBIs this year, helping North Carolina earn its fourth straight trip to the College World Series, which begins this weekend.

Ackley played mostly first base for the Tar Heels as he recovered from elbow ligament replacement surgery this season. But his impressive speed makes him a candidate to switch to center field as a pro.

"This is a guy we thought could be here in a short period of time," Mariners general manager Jack Zduriencik said. "We think this kid's got a really nice future."

It was Seattle's highest pick since 1993, when the Mariners took Alex Rodriguez first overall.

The San Diego Padres grabbed high school outfielder Donavan Tate at No. 3.

A gifted all-around athlete, Tate was a baseball and football star at Cartersville High in Georgia, and he has committed to play both sports at North Carolina. He is the son of former NFL running back Lars Tate.

Only a few years ago, the baseball draft was held in virtual obscurity via conference call. This year it went prime time for the first time.

With commissioner Bud Selig announcing picks from the podium, the first round was broadcast live on MLB Network. The only thing missing was a Green Room filled with anxious prospects sporting flashy suits—most declined the invitation.

One local prospect did show up, however. High school center fielder Mike Trout from New Jersey sat in a replica dugout with more than a dozen friends and family members, who rejoiced when he was selected 25th overall by the Los Angeles Angels.

"It's been a great experience," Trout said. "A once-in-a-lifetime deal. It was the best feeling in the world."

Selig would like to see more prospects attend in the future. Several Hall of Famers were on hand as club representatives, including Al Kaline, Tommy Lasorda and Billy Williams.

"We can do more to boost this event," Selig said, "but this is a huge move in the right direction."

Eleven of the first 15 picks were pitchers, considered the strength of this unpredictable draft class. Eight in a row went from Nos. 5-12.

The fourth and fifth selections were players who soared up draft boards late.

Pittsburgh went for Boston College catcher Tony Sanchez, a late bloomer, and Baltimore chose high school right-hander Matt Hobgood out of California.

San Francisco took another righty, Zack Wheeler out of East Paulding High School in Georgia. The Giants picked right before his hometown Atlanta Braves, who were thought to be interested in Wheeler.

The Braves then selected Mike Minor, who joined David Price (2007) and Jeremy Sowers (2004) as Vanderbilt lefties to go among the first seven picks.

The Nationals were the first team to have a pair of top-10 picks. They chose reliever Drew Storen at No. 10, a right-hander from Stanford.

That pick was compensation for Washington failing to sign its selection at No. 9 last year, Missouri pitcher Aaron Crow. After playing in an independent minor league, Crow went back into the draft pool this year and was chosen No. 12 overall by Kansas City.

Rebuenog sets score to beat for RGA June Ace

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

John Rebuenog moved a step closer to gaining a slot to the Refaluwasch Golf Association's yearend club championship after setting the score to beat in the RGA June Ace qualifier last Saturday at the Marianas Country Club.

Rebuenog, a 24-handicapper, carded a net 71 after firing a 50 and 45 on the front and back nines, respectively, for a gross 95. Asterio Tawanpiy topped the qualifier with his net 69, but was disqualified from setting the score to beat and winning another Ace title since he had already claimed the March Ace plum. As per RGA rules, the next best net is automatically the score to beat in the next tournament. If no RGA member logs better than Rebuenog's 71, he gets to keep the June Ace title and join Tawanpiy and four other early qualifiers in the club championship this December.

RGA will be holding its second tournament for this month on June 21, also at the Marpi course. Check-in time is at 11am, while tee off is at 12pm.

Nine other RGA members competed in the June Ace qualifier, namely Joe Saures (net 73), Jess Wabol (83), Jordon Kosam (84), Joe Wabol (79), Dwayne Stephens (76), Tom Tebuteb (79), Ulyses Kapileo (82), Jesse Seman (77), and Tars Olopai (78).

The 18-handicapper Saures was consistent at MCC with his 46 and 45 on the front and back nines, respectively, for a gross 91.

Tawanpiy, a 7-handicapper, shot the lowest gross with his 5-over par 77 after drilling a 39 on the front and 38 on the back. Jess Wabol had the second low gross with his 85 after carding a 42 in the first nine holes and a 43 in the last.

Kosam was sluggish on the front nine with a 51 before recovering a bit with his 45 on the back for a gross 96. The 23-handicapper Joe Wabol also struggled at MCC with his 54 and 50 on the front and back nines, respectively, while Stephens performed 14 strokes better with his gross score of 90 (49 and 41).

Tebuteb and Kapileo suffered similar tough lucks in last weekend's tournament with the former tallying a gross 101 (54 and 47) and the latter nailing a gross 103 (46 and 57).

Seman and Olopai tied for the third best low gross with their identical scores of 86. Seman had similar scores of 43 on the front and back nines, while Olopai had a 44 in the first nine holes and improved a bit in the last with his 42.

Olopai won the closest to the pin contest on hole No. 6, while Tawanpiy prevailed on No. 12.

For more information about RGA tournaments, call Jess Wabol at 288-1129 or Kosam at 483-4503.

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the last two practices, we have won seven out of nine quarters against the men's teams we have played. Defensively, they have become aggressive, and offensively, they have learned to make the extra pass to the open shooter, and their confidence when they shoot is solid right now. They get physical on the court and are no longer afraid of getting knocked to the floor and diving on the floor for a loose ball," Sewell said.

"They are shooting well right now at the free throw line, and they are getting there more often because they now attack the basket even with a bigger, stronger, and faster guy pushing them down the lane. They are getting better at converting layups and they come off the steal more aggressively running an attack. They are better than they were a month ago," he added.

However, Sewell said they still need to work harder on transition offense and be extra aggressive in getting rebounds.

"We are still slow in running our transition offenses, we are weak at setting and running through pick and rolls, we have moments when our passing is exceptional and then moments when we have no idea what a bounce pass is. We can agonizingly be slow in transition," said the veteran coach.

"We still have to work on boxing out, we have to work more on help defense, and we must work harder at playing defense with our feet and hips and not getting called for sloppy reach in fouls," he added.

Sewell agrees that the CNMI cagebelles will be the underdogs in the tournament, but that notion may work on their advantage.

"The only advantage we may have over the other nations is that they may have a preconceived idea about CNMI Women's Nationals. A notion that they (CNMI cagebelles) are not ready to be competitive, but it is always fun to be an underdog that's got an attitude that they have something to prove. I think the girls are developing that attitude," Sewell said.

"If we can hang around late into the fourth quarter with any of the teams we will play then we might be able to steal a game. After all we aren't suppose to win any," he added.

CNMI

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nated new shot clocks to replace the non-functioning ones formerly at the gym. Once again, FIBA Oceania covered the cost of shipping.

And just recently, the Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands announced that Molten, makers of the official basketball used in all FIBA competitions, has donated 40 brand-new, top-of-the-line official basketballs and ball racks for the tournament. The balls and ball racks arrived on Saipan late last week. The basketballs are the same model that is used at the Olympics and World Championships.

All of the equipment will stay on Saipan after the tournament, as BANMI passes these gifts on to the people of the CNMI. BANMI estimates the value of the donated equipment and shipping at more than $40,000.

A staff of DPW repairs the windows of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Finally, the Ada Gym is getting a major facelift. Restrooms and locker rooms have been refurbished. The playing court has been cleaned and repaired, and is being relined in accordance with the new FIBA rules. The scoreboard has been fixed. The bleachers have been repainted. And the outside windows and doors are being repaired.

All of this will help the CNMI put its best face forward when the Pacific comes to town for the tournament. Just as important, the new equipment and the renovated facilities will serve as a lasting legacy for the people of the CNMI to enjoy for years to come.

Elias Rangamar, BANMI president and chair of the Organizing Committee, expressed his sincere appreciation to Molten, Mondo, FIBA, and FIBA Oceania for their generous donations.

"I cannot say strongly enough how grateful we are for these generous donations of sporting equipment. The Ada Gym is a facility for all of the people, and as a result of this Tournament, the facility will be so much better for everyone to use and enjoy."

Australia and New Zealand, along with Pacific powerhouses Guam and New Caledonia, will send men's and women's teams to compete with the CNMI's best.

Gold sponsors for the tournament include Shell Marianas, IT&E, Tan Holdings, and the Joeten Charitable Foundation. Tournament patrons include the Marianas Visitors Authority, the Saipan Legislative Delegation, the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association, and the Saipan Grand Hotel. ***(PR)***

UMESSUPUOUT

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South Beach and the deadlock will be broken by head-to-head record. Angry Red Dragon won its lone match against South Beach on May 12.

Besides the Angry Red Dragon-MHS Bobais tiff, three more games were set for last night with results of these matches to determine the seedings in the playoff round.

So far only Numa Numa and Hits for Brains are assured of the No. 1 and 2 spots in the playoffs, which will be played tonight.

UMESSUPUOUT is in third, but will move to fourth if Hoof Hearted (7-3) wins over MHS One Heart. Hoof Hearted and MHS One Heart were playing in last night's first game.

MHS One Heart is currently in fifth place with its 6-4 slate, but could end up in a tie for fifth to seventh place with Plum Smugglers (6-5), and Spankers (6-5), pending last night's games results. Spankers were playing Grace Christian Academy in the last night's second game. GCA had back-to-back games, as it was also set to collide with Numa Numa (10-0), which was trying to have a perfect regular season last night.

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their victim at the No. 2 spot.

Salty Boys and Lancheros now have identical 5-3 slates.

Percy Omechelang pitched in no relief for Salty Boys, allowed only five hits, walked one, and struck out two. His first strikeout at the top of the first inning foiled Lancheros' best chance to score.

With two outs and the bases loaded, Omechelang struck out sixth batter and Lancheros second baseman Bill Aguon.

Lancheros made one final push to make it to the scoreboard and extend the game, but the top of the seventh inning ended quickly with their first three batters going back to their dugout. Omechelang struck out leadoff batter Ben Mesa and the next two flied out.

Trubak 6, Choll Aces 5

Trubak completed the day of the underdogs with its 6-5 triumph in extra innings over Choll Aces.

Trubak had only a win and was at second to the last in the team standings before meeting the then third placer Choll Aces.

The Rufino Aguon-led Trubak gained its second win after scoring two runs in the extra inning and catcher Ben Camacho making a big defensive stop at the bottom of the eighth inning.

Trubak scored two runs in the extra inning in Ben Camacho's single and Ernest Kanai's sacrifice fly for a 6-4 lead.

Choll Aces moved within one, as Sheldon Fernandez's single drove Roland Martin home. With two outs and a runner on second base, Robin Secharmidal had a foul ball with Camacho catching it to end the game.

Choll Ace dropped to fourth place with their 4-4 record.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE
East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	34	24	.586	–
New York	34	24	.586	–
Toronto	34	27	.557	1 1/2
Tampa Bay	29	31	.483	6
Baltimore	25	33	.431	9

Central Division

Detroit	32	26	.552	–
Minnesota	29	31	.483	4
Chicago	27	32	.458	5 1/2
Cleveland	26	34	.433	7
Kansas City	24	33	.421	7 1/2

West Division

Texas	33	25	.569	–
Los Angeles	29	27	.518	3
Seattle	28	30	.483	5
Oakland	26	31	.456	6 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE
East Division

Philadelphia	33	23	.589	–
New York	31	25	.554	2
Atlanta	29	28	.509	4 1/2
Florida	29	31	.483	6
Washington	15	41	.268	18

Central Division

Milwaukee	33	25	.569	–
Chicago	29	26	.527	2 1/2
Cincinnati	30	27	.526	2 1/2
St. Louis	31	28	.525	2 1/2
Pittsburgh	26	32	.448	7
Houston	25	31	.446	7

West Division

Los Angeles	40	20	.667	–
San Francisco	30	27	.526	8 1/2
San Diego	27	31	.466	12
Colorado	26	32	.448	13
Arizona	25	34	.424	14 1/2

Yesterday's Games
Cincinnati 3, Washington 2
N.Y. Mets 6, Philadelphia 5
Atlanta 4, Pittsburgh 3
Florida 4, St. Louis 3
Chicago Cubs 7, Houston 1
Colorado 3, Milwaukee 2
San Francisco 9, Arizona 4
L.A. Dodgers 6, San Diego 4
Cleveland 8, Kansas City 4
Baltimore 3, Seattle 1
L.A. Angels 4, Tampa Bay 3
Boston 7, N.Y. Yankees 0
Toronto 9, Texas 0
Detroit 7, Chicago White Sox 6, 10 innings
Minnesota 10, Oakland 5

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

BELAU MASTERS STANDINGS

Dolphins	7	1
Lancheros	5	3
Salty Boys	5	3
Choll Aces	4	4
Peleliu	3	5
Trubak	2	5
Kagman Jack	1	6

NMIVA STANDINGS

Numa Numa	10	0
Hits For Brains	9	2
UMESSUPUOUT	8	3
Hoof Hearted	7	3
MHS One Heart	6	4
Plum Smugglers	6	5
Spankers	5	5
Angry Red Dragon	3	7
South Beach	4	7
GCA	2	7
MHS Bobais	1	9
We're Here	1	10

2009 CNMI District Tournament

Photos By
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Right, Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos prepares to make the ceremonial pitch during the opening ceremony for the 2009 CNMI District Tournament last Friday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Far right, Kassandra Tudela Royal joins guests at the opening ceremony in singing the U.S. and CNMI anthems.

Far left, the Saipan Senior All-Stars battled Tinian in two games and swept all matches to earn the right to represent the CNMI in the regional tournament in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Left, team Luta Juniors All-Stars.

Members, coaches, and the manager of Saipan Junior All-Stars pose for a group photo before the opening ceremony for the 2009 CNMI District Tournament last Friday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

CNMI District Administrator James Ada delivers the welcome remarks during the opening ceremony for the 2009 CNMI District Tournament.

Saipan Little League president Mike Borja, right, shows the certificate of recognition given to Rota, Saipan, and Tinian by the Micronesian Youth Service Network. Joining him are, from left, Rota Little League president Juan Ayuyu, CNMI District Administrator James Ada, and CNMI baseball great Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios.

The Tinian Senior All-Stars gather for a group photo before their game against Saipan.

The Saipan Major All-Stars will represent the CNMI to the regional tournament in Taiwan next month.

The MHS JROTC leads the presentation of colors during the opening ceremony for the 2009 CNMI District Tournament.

Rebuenog sets score to beat for RGA June Ace

John Rebuenog moved a step closer to gaining a slot to the Refaluwasch Golf Association's yearend club championship after setting the score to beat in the RGA June Ace qualifier last Saturday at the Marianas Country Club.

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Magic shoot 63 percent in win over Lakers

Missing for two games, Orlando found its Magic touch. Making easy shots and tough ones from everywhere, the Magic won their first game in two visits to the NBA finals.

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Lean women's team for FIBA caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Nikita Hofschneider, seen here dribbling against a Mt. Carmel School defender in the MISO caging early this year, made it to the nine-player lineup of the CNMI Women's Nationals who will play against four other teams in the 2009 FIBA Oceania Basketball Tournament later this month.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

CNMI Women's Nationals coach William "Bill" Sewell will have a depleted, but fearless crew for the 2009 FIBA Oceania Basketball Tournament.

Sewell has announced that the CNMI Women's Nationals will have only nine players going up against the complete teams of powerhouses Australia and New Zealand, New Caledonia, and Guam.

"The lineup has been finalized and only nine young ladies were able to push themselves to make the physical and mental adjustments needed to put on a uniform for this tournament. So we will be one down every game we play," Sewell said.

Making the team are high school cagebelles Lia Rangamar, Yvonne and Yvette Bennett, Dion Diaz, Lena Guzman, Mercedes Mesa, Nicole Lebria, and Nikita Hofschneider. Joining them is veteran Connie Camacho, who is also the team captain.

Rangamar and Guzman play for the MHS Dolphins, while the Bennett twins, Mesa, Diaz, and Hofschneider suited up for the Kagman Lady Ayuyus who won last year's MISO caging. Lebria is the top player of the Mt. Carmel School and along with Rangamar and Camacho played for the CNMI Women's Nationals in the 2006 Micronesian Games.

Sewell admitted he has a very young lineup, but his wards have grown a lot since Day 1 of their regular scrimmage with male players.

"The young ladies have grown up on the court over the last couple of months, as they continue to scrimmage against men's teams. They are not playing timid anymore. Over

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CNMI *to reap benefits from Oceania hosting*

The sporting community of the Northern Marianas will have a lasting legacy as a result of the upcoming Oceania Basketball Tournament. The tournament will be held on Saipan from June 21 to 26.

Mondo and the International Basketball Federation, or FIBA, have donated two portable basketball

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

One of two portable basketball backstops and backboards donated by Mondo and FIBA will soon be in place at this portion of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

backstops and backboards, to replace the old ones in the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium which no longer complied with FIBA rules. The new backstops are similar to those used in NBA arenas. They can be folded up and moved when the gym is needed for other purposes. The new backstops were shipped to Saipan free of charge by FIBA Oceania.

FIBA and Mondo have also do-

See CNMI on Page 26

UMESSUPUOUT takes spoiler role in 4-person beach volleyball

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

UMESSUPUOUT foiled Angry Red Dragon's first attempt to advance to the playoff round in the 2009 Miller Lite/Monster Energy Drink 4-Person Beach Volleyball League last Tuesday night on the Pacific Islands Club sand court.

UMESSUPUOUT won over Angry Red Dragon in the lone game in the penultimate day of the regular season, 21-18,15-21, 15-9. UMESSUPUOUT is already in the playoffs and could have just relaxed, but decided to make one final push to finish with an 8-3 record and boost its chances for the No. 3 seeding.

UMESSUPUOUT's Melody Matson returns the ball during one of their games in the NMIFA four-person beach volleyball league last week on the PIC sand court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

While the win strengthened UMESSUPUOUT' bid for the Top 3 seeding, the loss put Angry Red Dragon's chances for the eighth and last playoff seat in danger.

Angry Red Dragon dropped to a 3-7 record and another loss to MHS Bobais last night would tie the former with South Beach at 4-7 slate. A tie for the last playoff spot will be broken by sets won. South Beach in 11 games won 14 sets. Pending last night's results of its game against MHS Bobais, Angry Red Dragon has had 13 sets won. If Angry Red Dragon losses all three sets, South Beach will take the last playoff ticket. If Angry Red Dragon wins a set, it will tie

See UMESSUPUOUT on Page 26

Day of underdogs in Belau Masters

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Upsets marked last Sunday's action in the 2009 Belau Masters Slow-pitch Softball League at the Dandan Elementary School Ballfield with three teams in the lower half of the team standings stunning their higher-ranked foes.

Peleliu caught the biggest fish last weekend after pulling off a 10-1 upset over the league-leading IT&E Dolphins.

Coming into Sunday's game, Peleliu was third to the last in the team standings with its 2-5 slate, while the Dolphins held a perfect 7-0 record.

Peleliu allowed the Dolphins to score only at the bottom of the sixth inning, handing the latter their first loss in the tournament.

The win improved Peleliu's record to 3-5 and although it remains in fifth place in the seven-team field, the team closes in to the three other squads at the top half of the team standings.

Outfielder Charley Kenty went 4-for-4 at bat for Peleliu, scored one run, and had two RBIs. Shortstop Poland Masaharu was 3-for-4, made two runs, and tallied two RBIs. Also contributing two RBIs was first baseman Henry Litulimar, who went 2-for-4 at the plate.

Donald Kinto pitched in no relief for Peleliu, allowed seven hits, walked four, and struck out two.

Salty Boys 3, Lancheros 0

Entering Sunday's game, Salty Boys were in fourth place, but after a 3-0 over the second-ranked Lancheros, they tied

See DAY on Page 26